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Anselmo;

OR,

THE DAY OF TRIAL.

A ROMANCE.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

BY

MARY HILL,

AUTHOR OF THE FOREST OF COMALVA, &c.

To live with fame,
The gods allow to many; but to die
With equal lustre, is a blessing Heaven
Selects from all the choicest boons of fate,
And with a sparing hand on few bestows.



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ANSELMO.

CHAP. I.

Live there men who slight immortal Fame?
Who, then, with incense, shall adore our name?
But, mortals, know 'tis still our greatest pride,
To blaze those virtues which the good would hide.
Rise! muses, rise! add all your tuneful breath,
These must not sleep in darkness and in death,
She said: in air the trembling music floats,
And on the winds triumphant swell the notes;
So soft, though high, so loud, and yet so clear,
Even list'ning angels lean from heaven to hear:
To farthest shores, th' ambrosial spirit flies,
Sweet to the world, and grateful to the skies.

TEMPLE OF FAME.

AMIDST the solemn grandeur of the Appenines, in the year 1689, stood an ancient gothic castle, defended by strong

battlements, and surrounded with an almost impassable fosse; accessible only by the narrow pass afforded by a massy drawbridge, which, flanked by two turrets, guarding a portcullis, formed a protection in those times of warfare with the neighbouring states, absolutely necessary for the safety of its inhabitants. Here resplendent magnificence maintained her seat, and proudly bade defiance to the invading marauders, who at this period sought to destroy, and to lay waste Italia's fertile plains, and for ever extinguish its pristine glory. This noble edifice being thus secured from the attack of savage banditti, or attempt of the unjust invader of a people's rights, here Peace, with all her attendant train of smiling loves, almost from time immemorial, had been accustomed to reign without alloy; and here, in some parts, uncultivated nature, variegated with agreeable wildness, surrounded the scene; whilst, in others, all the elegancies of human

human art were called in aid, to diversify and to improve its bright original. The long-extended avenues, which contained the beauteous elm, the sycamore, and oriental plane, although they presented a gloomy appearance, were of utility, as their beneficial effects served to shade the castle from the noonday heat, and to greatly heighten its solemnity. Here Pomona, likewise, shed her richest stores, whilst heaven-taught songsters breathed forth melodious strains of joy to their celestial visitor, for diffusing plenty through the land. Through every lawn, beside every grove and enamelled plain, flowed crystal rivulets, embanked with odoriferous shrubs and flowers, to enrich the scene, and to adorn it with inexpressible variety. But the chiefest beauty of this Arcadian landscape, from which science boasts its origin, and decoration its splendour, was a temple erected to the south of the castle, which had, in ancient times, been dedicated to Miner-

va. This superb pile of building rose majestically to the sight, and displayed, amidst this sylvan scene, one of the most valued relics of Roman sculpture. Lofty pillars of the Corinthian order supported the fabric, which consisted of varied sorts of marble, the most beautiful in form and colour. The windows were of painted glass, representing the different parts of heathen mythology. A noble terrace surrounded the dome of the temple, which, gradually rising into a cone, formed a cupola; it was encircled with gold latticing, and embellished with all the insignia sacred to the goddess to whom the edifice was dedicated.

This domain was the hereditary possession of count Anselmo, the last surviving branch of an illustrious family; not dignified by birth alone, but from the innumerable acts of heroism, which had been most conspicuously displayed by his ancestors. The dying words of the father to the son were—"Seek not for

for happiness but at the shrine of glory! be the champion of your country's honour! live not for yourself, but for others! then, when the awful period, in which you now behold your parent, must to yourself arrive, a refulgent light will beam across your soul, scenes of substantial felicity be presented to your view, and your last expiring sigh will be wafted to heaven, the messenger to prepare you for never-failing bliss."

This pious and affecting exhortation sunk deep into the heart of the young Anselmo, who could only reply (interrupted by mental agony, whilst pressing the almost-lifeless hand of his father to his bosom)—"I will never be the cause of an inglorious stain on our family, on the revered name of Anselmo!"

For eighteen months after the melancholy event took place, the count avoided all society; sequestered in his paternal mansion, he entirely devoted himself to study, which, although for

the present irksome to his ambitious and enterprising spirit, prepared him the better for those active scenes in which afterwards he was engaged. He possessed a form at once elegant and majestic, commanding the instantaneous respect of every one; yet not without being joined to some degree of fear, arising from the grave and penetrating cast of his countenance, the expression of which was the herald that announced, without the aid of speech, what passed within his soul. The pursuits usually followed with avidity by young men of his age, and particularly in that adoration to the fair sex which in southern climates is so distinguishable, was always condemned in the strongest terms by Anselmo, as a life of inglorious ease. When rallied by his friends on the subject, he would reply with firmness, that —"The post of honour should never be deserted for a woman." His mother died the hour she gave him birth. Anselmo

selmo was therefore nurtured from infancy under the sole direction of his father, and brought up in the art of war and study of eloquence, Demosthenes being his model; thereby enabling him to shine with equal praise in the senate and in the field. On his arrival at manhood, several matrimonial alliances, highly advantageous, were offered for his acceptance, yet were they invariably rejected by Anselmo.

In the autumn of the year 1690, the count took his departure from the castle of Valleroy, and proceeded to the splendid court of Savoy, by invitation of its illustrious duke, in whose service he was then engaged.

As nothing material occurred to arrest attention, we shall now pass over several years of his residence in that country, during which period the count rose, with the greatest rapidity, to the most distinguished offices in the state, blessed

with fortune, fame, and indeed with the height of human grandeur.

One morning, on his return home from the duke's levee, he was apprized by his servant that a lady, apparently in great affliction, solicited an interview with him, having in her possession a letter which must be personally delivered.

Anselmo, whose thoughts were then agitated with state affairs, replied, "That he could admit no strangers," but directed his secretary, signior Lusignan, to attend on the lady. The servant departed, and shortly after returned with a card, announcing the name of the supplicant as madame de Montauban.

The count hesitated, yet after some minutes of deliberation, again exclaimed "I cannot see her!" when instantly the door of the chamber opened, and signior Lusignan appeared leading in the stranger.

Anselmo started, but on recovering himself,

himself, offered her a chair, and requested she would be seated.

Madame was at that period in her thirtieth year, and although in deep sorrow, she possessed one of the finest countenances in nature; her interesting form commanded immediate admiration; and the intelligence of her look and manner, respect and love, from all beholders.

Anselmo, notwithstanding his boasted indifference to the sex in general, could not view unmoved such a combination of charms as were now presented to his sight. The count had often heard mention of the beauty of Almeria de Montauban, but he now observed that it was far above all representation. Her husband, general de Montauban, had been banished, by order of the duke of Savoy, to the island of Sardinia, and imprisoned for more than five years, at the instigation of some secret enemy, who had represented him as hostile to

the existing government; and likewise for being the author of a libel, several copies of which had been found in his possession.

Montauban, therefore, in the dead of night, was torn from the embraces of his family, and conveyed under a strong guard to Sardinia, without even being permitted to impart one word of comfort to his almost distracted wife, whose frantic cries would have pierced the most obdurate heart.

Time, however, the great soother and only remedy for mental anguish, so far recovered the health of the amiable Almeria, as to allow her, after a period of some months, to consign her son Albert, a lovely boy then about twelve years of age, to the care of her brother, signior Orvillé, she having obtained permission of the government to console and comfort poor Montauban in his captivity.

At length, by the active vigilance of the friends of the general, they thought they

they had discovered the *real writer* of the libel. Montauban, therefore, had now sent his wife to Turin, in order to strengthen the claims which had already been made in favour of him; and to present a petition to the duke of Savoy, for the purpose of soliciting a public trial, that the general might be enabled to clear his character from the false and villanous aspersions which had been passed on it.

Almeria, on her arrival at Turin, was advised, in the first instance, to make a personal application to the count Anselmo, who, at that period, was high in favour with the court party, to sue for his intercession with the duke, on behalf of her husband. For this purpose was the wife of Montauban now exerting all her powers of rhetoric with Anselmo, and well was she endowed by nature for the arduous task. A juster idea cannot be afforded to the mind of the reader of the success that might be expected to

follow her solicitation, than to quote the language of the immortal bard, that

> "In her youth
> There is a prone and speechless dialect,
> Such as moves men; besides, she hath a prosp'rous art,
> When she would play with reason and discourse;
> And well she can persuade."

Nor was it then lost on the grave and senatorial Anselmo, who at length promised to become the friend, the advocate of Montauban, whose address to the duke was, at the particular request of the count, read aloud by the weeping Almeria, to the following effect:—

"MOST HIGH AND ILLUSTRIOUS PRINCE,

"Your faithful and devoted servant, Leontine de Montauban, a woeful prisoner in the island of Sardinia, with the utmost submission and reverence to your royal highness's decrees, whatever

ever they may be, yet fully relying on the known love of justice which has so conspicuously marked your august reign, I do humbly pray for your highness's clemency. That I am innocent of the heavy charge alledged against me, God is my witness, by whose omnipotence alone, I hope I have been enabled to discover one of the many who no doubt conspired to injure me in my royal master's opinion. The prayer of my petition is, therefore, to be allowed a public trial, by which I may be enabled to clear my own character, to bring to light my unjust accusers, and to prove to the world, that however iniquity may flourish for a while, yet certain dishonour will in the end pursue those who subsist by cruelly inflicting misery on others. I humbly beg leave to sign myself

Your royal highness's

Most faithful and loyal subject,

LEONTINE DE MONTAUBAN.

Done at my prison,
February 28, 1701."

Having

Having read it, she closed the paper, and presented it to Anselmo; and with full confidence in his endeavours being crowned with ultimate success, she departed, expressing at the same time her warmest thanks, and in assuring the count of the gratitude Montauban would ever feel for his benevolence.

The interview Anselmo had just had with Almeria was of that kind the most capable of affecting the human heart. A young and amiable woman, pleading the cause of a husband, on whose happiness or misery, through life, depended that of hers, is certainly accompanied with an almost irresistible claim to our attention and generosity.

Several weeks, however, were passed by madame de Montauban in anxious suspense, respecting the success or failure of her application. Hope, fear, and doubt, had alternately taken possession of her mind; but at the end of a month all anxiety was terminated; for on her

second,

second interview with count Anselmo, who had obligingly waited on the fair supplicant, to announce the reply of his sovereign relative to the petition of her husband, he imparted to her the pleasing intelligence of the prayer being granted, with full permission to seek the redress he solicited for.

The sudden change in the countenance of Almeria, from hopeless despondence to the liveliest joy, spoke most forcibly to the feelings of the count, the sincerity of her love for Montauban: he therefore suggested that an immediate courier should be sent off to apprize the general of the result. "Oh, no," replied madame, with peculiar energy, "I will be myself the messenger, the bearer of the happy tidings, as the conviction that every moment that will be leading me nearer to him, may allay much of the inquietude I do even yet suffer on his account. Fears for his health, strange presages of future evil, ever the companion

panion I believe of the unfortunate, continually possess me, and——"—"My dear madam," said the count, rising from his seat, and hastily interrupting her, "I fervently hope, when I have the satisfaction of again seeing you, these forebodings of unhappiness may have given way to the delightful sensation of promising felicity." After which, with every demonstration of his friendship, Anselmo departed, almost overpowered with her thanks and benedictions.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

" Dignity and grace
Adorn his frame, and manly beauty, join'd
With strength Herculean; on his aspect shines
Sublimest virtue, and desire of fame
Where justice gives the laurel; in his eye,
The extinguishable spark which fires
The souls of patriots; while his brow supports
Undaunted valour and contempt of death."

Such was Leontine de Montauban, for whom the count had already professed so great an interest; not merely at the representation tendered by Almeria, but from having frequently heard the most honourable mention of the general by the officers of his regiment, by whom he

was

was universally beloved and respected. To the parents of Almeria the count had been more than once introduced by his father, the elder Anselmo having been on terms of intimacy with them during their residence in Venice. St. Orvillé, although not in affluent circumstances, had contrived on his small patrimony to educate his son and two daughters, Almeria and Olivia, in all the branches of polite literature. Possessed of every accomplishment, united to great personal charms, and of unblemished character, the family of St. Orvillé had been early received amongst the first circles of fashionable life: they did not court esteem or popularity, but it followed them wherever they went.

Adjoining to their villa, which was remarkable for the beauty of its situation and elegant simplicity, stood the château of Montauban, formerly belonging to a French marquis of that name, who had been a resident in Italy for many years.

years. Various conjectures were assigned for the reason of his deserting his native country; the most probable, however, was, that in early life he had formed a tender attachment for a lady, who had for a length of time been betrothed to another, an English nobleman, to whom she was afterwards married. This event, it was supposed, gave the marquis of Montauban a disgust to France, and from having an esteemed friend resident in Italy, to determine him to pass the remainder of his days in that country, where soon after he married a Venetian lady of high birth, and the fruit of that union was the present general de Montauban. The marquis, however, was far from being happy; a *first* love still held the empire o'er his heart; and being of an extreme jealous disposition, he even doubted the legitimacy of his offspring. At length differences grew so high between them, they mutually agreed to separate. The marchioness returned to her nearest relation,

lation, a brother then a resident at Naples, with her infant Leontine, who was rendered, if possible, more dear to her, from the cruel severity it had met with from its father, the marquis having extended the same dislike to his son that he felt for his wife Leonora.

In the space of five years, she was left a portionless widow, her husband at his death having bequeathed his immense fortune to this *friend*, who was the superior of the monastery of Camaldoli. This unjust act, however, did not in the least depress the spirits of the marchioness, all her wants being amply supplied by her brother, count Fernando, with whom she continued to reside, until Leontine had arrived at the age of one-and-twenty. At that period Fate separated them from their endeared relation. The count Fernando, on returning one evening from the church of Notre Dame, in company with his sister and nephew, was assassinated. The villain,

lain, on plunging his poniard into the breast of the count, exclaimed, "Now my *revenge* is gratified! so *fare you well.*" Such was the adroitness with which this diabolical deed was executed, that in one moment the unfortunate Fernando became a lifeless corpse. Montauban called aloud for assistance, and endeavoured to arrest the flight of the murderer; he however eluded all discovery.

To describe the agonized feelings of Leonora on beholding this distressing event, is impossible. A gentleman who was passing at the time assisted Leontine in supporting the lifeless form of his uncle to an adjoining house, where they were instantly admitted by the humane owner; and had every aid administered to the hapless count, but with no effect—*life* was quite extinguished.

The marchioness was inconsolable for his loss; she had tenderly loved Fernando, not merely from his being so closely allied

allied to her, but from the excellent virtues with which the count had been so conspicuously adorned. Montauban, perceiving that his mother continued to indulge, too fatally for her repose, the remembrance of his uncle, strenuously advised her to return to Venice, which city was the residence of the marchioness's late parents, where they had many friends. This request, after much persuasion, she adopted, and Montauban, fearful his mother might regret the assenting to it, lost no time in carrying it into execution. The estates of the count, from his being unmarried, legally descended to his sister, and for which they soon found a purchaser. Leontine and his mother then departed from the melancholy scene, and, on their journey to Venice, they determined to pass several days at Rome.

In this ancient and beautiful city, the curiosity of Montauban, and his ardent desire of procuring classical information,

was

was amply gratified. As the carriage rolled under the triumphal arch, erected in honour of Titus, and on which is represented, in basso-relievo, the emperor in a car drawn by four horses, returning from his brilliant victories over the Jews in Jerusalem, Montauban exclaimed with rapture, "Oh mother, such noble deeds as there inscribed make me ashamed of the inglorious life I lead—I can no longer remain inactive, when my country requires assistance—do but suffer me to enter the lists of Fame, and your son will endeavour to imitate the transcendant qualities of a Titus!"

The leading trait in the character of the marchioness was ambition; this ardour of her son, therefore, to commence a military life, met with no opposition. With what pleasure then did Leontine visit the monumental records of those departed heroes, who by their achievements had once rendered Rome the first city in the world! The temples, the theatres,

atres, and the mutilated remains of stately palaces, which had formerly been adorned with all the luxurious refinements of the East, alike engaged his attention. "In these edifices," he exclaimed, "I feel the Roman spirit rise within me; here the conquerors held their councils, under these roofs once flourished, with godlike greatness, a Cæsar! a Constantine! here, too, a Cicero, with all-subduing eloquence, beyond even the conception of our days, declaimed for virtue's cause, in the presence of thousands of his countrymen, and whose approbation of any design projected by the warriors was thought equivalent to an army!"

The noble palace of the Vatican did not fail likewise to draw forth the admiration of Leontine, which for its magnificence, the great variety of apartments that it contains, and its extensive library, filled with the most valuable books, and rarest manuscripts, is justly estimated

estimated as the first princely residence in Europe. From the gallery of the Vatican, communicating with chateau St. Ange, they proceeded to view that fortress; and on returning from thence to their hotel, an incident occurred which chased away, for the present, all Montauban's ideas of glory. Signior Orvillé, with his two daughters, were then on a visit to a relation at Rome; he was passing near the Vatican at the time the marchioness's carriage drew up to the gates of the palace to receive them; and having been on terms of friendship with the marquis of Montauban, he addressed himself to her by name, and paid his respects. St. Orvillé was instantly recognised by the marchioness, who, on account of his having been one of the executors of her late husband's effects, was therefore received with much pleasure, and invited to spend the evening with them at their hotel.

Signior Orvillé was true to his ap-

pointment; and on his being introduced by the marchioness to Leontine, he presented to the latter a sealed packet, but with this injunction, that Montauban was not to inspect its contents until his departure. Orvillé likewise related much useful information during this visit to his mother, and dwelt particularly on the injustice of the will of the marquis de Montauban, which he thought had nevertheless been illegally executed, no person having signed it, except the advocate and the monk of Camaldoli, into whose hands the whole of the fortune had devolved. The marchioness, in answer, said she grieved only for her son, who, in being thus deprived of his inheritance, was prevented from acting with the munificence his heart would otherwise have dictated—"Leontine, however," she continued, "proposes to enter into the army, where I have no doubt his merits will be justly rewarded by his country. To-morrow we propose again commencing

commencing our journey towards Venice; if you have any commands, therefore, for that place, signior, we shall be happy to execute them."

St. Orvillé, on returning thanks for her politeness, said he had a trifling commission with which he would trouble her. He then obtained leave to wait on the marchioness the succeeding morning, and departed.

The packet was now immediately unsealed by Leontine, to satisfy his curiosity. Great was the astonishment of Montauban and his mother in perusing its contents. The late marquis, from the partiality he entertained for the family of St. Orvillé, and to remunerate for the trouble of his being an executor, had left him as a legacy the chateau de Montauban, to be disposed of as he thought proper. It was yet in the possession of signior Orvillé, but inhabited only by the domestics of its late master. This just Venetian had always determined

on restoring the estate to its lawful heir, if he should survive the attainment of twenty-one years of age. That period was now arrived; St. Orvillé learnt that the son of his friend was living, and a resident with his mother at Naples; the object, therefore, of his present journey (if he had not met with him thus by accident at Rome) was for that purpose. The packet presented to Leontine de Montauban, whom Orvillé addressed by the title of marquis, was the assignment of the estate in question, with an apology for having so long retained it, but which St. Orvillé expressed to be from the apprehension, that during his minority, it might have been wrested from him, by the consummate art and treachery of the monk of Camaldoli.

The gratitude of the marchioness and her son, at this unbounded generosity of signior Orvillé, who was to them almost a stranger, is inexpressible.

Leontine instantly flew to the resi-

dence

dence of his benefactor; and on inquiring for him, was answered by the servant, that St. Orvillé was not within, but that his eldest daughter would receive any message he had to deliver. Montauban, therefore, sent up his name to signora Orvillé; and on being ushered by the domestic into an apartment, he beheld Almeria, who appeared to him as a divinity. The overflowings of a grateful heart deprived him of the power of utterance.

The unstudied graces of her deportment, the beauty, the dignity of her form, and the sweet complaisance with which she received Montauban, all conspired to heighten the fascination with which he was already enchained. He would have spoken, but could not; and this painful silence was as distressing to Almeria as to himself. The entrance, however, of signior Orvillé relieved them from their mutual embarrassment.

To relate the gratitude of the one for

a benefit received, or the joy of the other in having it in his power to bestow happiness on a deserving character, would be superfluous. The language of the heart, in the first instance, and the eloquent looks which accompanied it, spoke the obligation which St. Orvillé had conferred with more sincerity than the parade of words usually adopted on such occasions.

Leontine, whose heart had received a deep impression in favour of Almeria, at the same time that he acknowledged the munificence of the Venetian, declined accepting it, without St. Orvillé would tender him the permission to pay his addresses to his incomparable daughter, that she might be a partaker of the splendour which awaited him. This proposal was not rejected, and in the space of three months, signora St. Orvillé became marchioness de Montauban. Leontine then took possession of his father's castle: his mother, at the particular

lar request of Almeria, still continuing to reside with them, in the enjoyment of every felicity.

The first abatement to the happiness of the young marchioness was her husband's determination of entering into the Piedmontese army; and as she resolutely persisted in her intention of accompanying him through the perilous scenes of warfare, Almeria was obliged to separate herself from her son Albert, then about seven years of age, leaving him under the care of his grandmother. In a very few years the marquis rose by his merits to the rank of general; and prosperity and honour seemed to smile with benignant influence on the house of Montauban. The olive branch of peace again waved over his native land, and the hero was returning to his paternal mansion, in the hopes of passing the remainder of his life in tranquillity. Mark the reverse—scarcely had the ge-

neral concluded on visiting his domains, ere he found himself a prisoner, deprived of his title and his fortune; all being confiscated to the government of Piedmont; and from the violence of the faction, which had so undeservedly risen against him, he was dragged to the loathsome prison of Oristagni, in the island of Sardinia. The hapless fate of Montauban proved a death-stroke to his aged mother, who only survived two days after that distressing event. During his imprisonment, accumulated evils awaited this unfortunate family: the mournful news arrived to Leontine and Almeria of the death of the humane, the generous, and noble-minded Venetian, St. Orvillé. In accompanying his youngest daughter and her husband over to England, on the very morning the vessel hove in sight of Britain, prompted by his humanity to save a female passenger, who had fallen overboard, poor St. Orvillé,

villé, although his endeavours proved successful in rescuing the lady, he fell a sacrifice to his exertions.

To meliorate, however, the grief of the mourners, the brother of Almeria had been actively engaged in their service, in attempting to trace out the writer of the libel; which having, in some degree, succeeded, it was by his advice that she was now in Turin, where every thing appeared to promise a successful issue. Not a day, not an hour, was then lost by Almeria, in the endeavour of releasing her husband from his unjust captivity.

CHAP. III.

When I approach
Her loveliness, so absolute she seems,
And in herself complete; so well to know
Her own, that what she wills to do or say
Seems wisest, virtuousest, discreetest, best;
All higher knowledge in her presence falls
Degraded; wisdom, in discourse with her,
Loses, discountenanc'd, and like folly shews;
Authority and reason on her wait
As one intended first, not after made
Occasionally; and to consummate all—
Greatness of mind, and nobleness, their seat
Build in her loveliest, and create an awe
About her, as a guard angelic plac'd. MILTON.

IMMEDIATELY after that count Anselmo had informed Almeria of the success attendant on her mission, she commenced

menced her journey to Leghorn, for the purpose of embarking for Sardinia. The grand and sublime scenes which every where presented themselves, to arrest the attention and amuse the eye of a traveller, were beheld, however, with perfect indifference by madame de Montauban, whose thoughts being so incessantly occupied on the completion of her journey, rendered her regardless of every other object. The slowness with which they were obliged to proceed through the mountainous region of the Apennines but ill-accorded with her present temper of mind. On arriving at Leghorn, and when the vessel in which she had embarked was approaching the shores of Sardinia, and the ancient towers of Oristagni appeared rising majestically to the sight, her agitation became so excessive, as to excite fear in the minds of her attendants that delirium would be the fatal consequence.

In the evening of the third day, the

vessel anchored in the cape of Cagliari; but on the passengers preparing to land, they had the misfortune to hear that an epidemic fever raged with great violence in the town and its environs: none, therefore, would venture to go on shore, excepting madame de Montauban, who, on offering an ample recompence, and pointing out to the sailors that her destination was not at Cagliari, but the castle of Oristagni, they consented to the proposal.

In less than an hour, Almeria, the general's old faithful servant Claude, and a female domestic, who had attended their mistress to Savoy, were safely landed near the eastern turret of Oristagni. On approaching the castle, they found the drawbridge let down, and only one centinel on duty. Fears for his master now pervaded the breast of poor Claude, at not observing the usual number of soldiers which had been accustomed to guard the prison. Madame de Mont-

auban

auban perceiving the alarm of her servant, and supposing it to arise from this circumstance, with a fixed look of unusual sternness, exclaimed—" Why do you tremble, man? Of what are you afraid? Shame upon you!" continued Almeria, " must you be taught fortitude from a woman?" When, with a motion of her hand, as if to prevent his following, she slowly approached the centinel, announced to him her name, and from the written paper presented to her by the count Anselmo, was permitted to pass the drawbridge.

Claude, who had hitherto proceeded by the side of his mistress in silence, now ventured to entreat he might be suffered to enter the castle first, thinking, from its deserted appearance, that his master had really been conveyed to some other abode on account of the fever. Almeria uttered no reply; and Claude, therefore, hastened onwards, and rang the bell.

The portal was opened by a man apparently

parently intoxicated, and the inquiry for general de Montauban was answered by —"Walk in, and you may see him."

Torrents of the finest eloquence could not produce more effect than this simple sentence did on the long-harassed mind of Almeria; to her it seemed as a transition from earth to heaven: but when, as they were proceeding with their conductor through the long aisles and vaulted passages which led to the prison-chamber of Montauban, and saw nor heard even the sound of any human being besides themselves, horror succeeded to chase away that momentary idea of happiness. They had now arrived at the entrance of those apartments in which, for several years, had been voluntarily confined the lovely Almeria, from the pleasure she took in performing those duties which so highly exalts the character of a woman.

The man unchained the door and withdrew. Madame immediately rushed into

into the chamber, but on not seeing Montauban, exclaimed, whilst looking wildly round, "What have you done with him? where is my Leontine?" She then ran through the various rooms, calling out for him in accents of the most despairing anguish. Claude observing his mistress in such a melancholy state, and dreading that worse consequences would ensue, left her to the care of Lauretta, whilst he went in search of assistance, and to learn what had been the fate of his master.

But too soon were all his fears realized. In an adjoining apartment he heard the sound of several voices, and shortly afterwards came out the man who had admitted them into the castle, followed by another of superior appearance, to whom Claude addressed, by an inquiry for general de Montauban. The stranger, with much apparent concern, then informed him, that the disorder which had been so fatal to many of his

comrades

comrades had proved likewise so to th
late prisoner, who had fallen a victim
it only five days before their arrival.

The distress of poor Claude at this n
lancholy intelligence may be more eas
imagined than described. Formerly,
had braved misfortune's sharpest quiv
but now he was old and infirm, a
therefore less able to withstand
shocks of adversity. The stranger (w
announced his name to be that of A
bine, and of having been lately inves
with the command of the castle,) perce
ing the embarrassment of Claude, off
ed his services, and likewise advised h
not to acquaint his mistress, at prese
of the unhappy event; but to state, t
the general having received prior ord
to set off immediately to Savoy, he h
taken his departure a short time sir
for the capital. Claude being perfec
ignorant in what manner to proceed
the best, readily took the advice of s
nior Aubine, as that persuasion too,
thoug

thought, would most probably induce madame de Montauban to return to her friends, who could better impart the sad event, and afford consolation for the loss she had suffered.

Such an arrangement became more practicable, when, on returning to the apartment, he found her quite composed, seated near the window, and employed in writing on a small piece of paper with a pencil. She looked at Claude on his approaching her, sighed deeply, and said—"I am going to send this letter to your master. I should have wished to have seen him, but I suppose Leontine will not permit it;" and continued, whilst folding up the paper, "to-morrow, therefore, I shall go home again to my little boy, for I am sure *he* will be glad to see me." This turn of mind was favourable to the intention of Claude's prevailing on his mistress to leave the prison; who, from so plausible a story,

a story, did readily accede to his proposition.

With much facility, Aubine then procured a vessel to convey the unfortunate Almeria and her attendants from this scene of misery. On the ensuing morning, therefore, after Claude had visited the adjoining chapel, where the remains of his ill-fated master were deposited, and over his grave had breathed a prayer for his future and endless felicity, madame de Montauban, Claude, and Lauretta, embarked once again for their native country.

Before the narrative is resumed, we must beg leave to pause, and here to draw the reader's attention to the incident just recorded, which has pourtrayed the mutability of all earthly enjoyments; and by which is deeply inculcated the propriety, nay absolute necessity, of its being impressed on the mind to endeavour to meet the various events of life's occurrences,

occurrences, whether of joy or of sorrow, with due composure, and with perfect resignation to the will and pleasure of Omnipotence; the extremes of either being equally detrimental to the health, as well as the content, of every individual—content is said, for real happiness ought not, must not be expected here on earth. This, a term or word, most pleasing to the ear, and flattering to the imagination, why should it be indulged, since it is but the phantom of the moment, and in existence has no reality? If any name, under misfortune—if any subject calls forth our pity more than another, it is that in which are observed the calamitous, the dire effects of a secret and powerful enemy; where, by the contrivance of one solitary person, a whole family, flourishing in the sunshine of popular favour; beloved, esteemed, respected, and adored, by all around; who, for their patriotism, well-meriting their country's gratitude,

titude, shall, from unseen means, the dark designs, and hidden machinations, of one being in human form, but in heart a demon, be levelled with the dust; cut down like the lofty beautiful tree (by the hand of the hewer), whose inviting and wide-spreading branches had oft served for grateful shelter to many a way-worn traveller, faint and weary with the mid-day sun. So fallen, then, was the once-respected, honourable house of Montauban, whose hospitable relief the distressed, of whatever denomination, received, and whose real goodness ranked it amongst the highest of the Italian realm.

In following the history of the valuable relic of that name, Providence destined that Almeria should once again be landed in safety on her native shores. For many months, however, an almost total insensibility succeeded the information of the death of her husband. She retired to a small villa near Savona, belonging

longing to her brother, St. Orvillé, who at that period held a lucrative situation under the Genoese government; and her son, having attained his sixteenth year, was soon afterwards sent by his uncle to Florence, for the purpose of completing his education.

The tranquillity of the country, aided by the comforts of religion, at length restored, in some degree, the afflicted mind of Almeria; who, in the second year of her residence in Italy, was enabled to accompany her brother to Florence, for the pleasure of seeing Albert, whose amiable disposition, and intelligence of look and manner, was all the fondest mother could have wished for, as a presage and early promise of his arriving at future wished-for excellence.

At this period, count Anselmo, being on a visit in that city to a Florentine nobleman, and having learnt by accident that madame de Montauban was likewise there, he immediately hastened to the hotel

hotel where they resided, to pay his respects to them. Anselmo had ever since Almeria's interview with him at Turin been particular in shewing her every attention. He had written several letters of condolence to her; but on account of the profound melancholy into which she had fallen, they were always answered in the most respectful terms by St. Orvillé.

If the assertion of a celebrated English poet be true, that we shall, at one time or other, all feel the passion of love, and that

> "*All* once the pleasing pain must prove—
> The fond emotions of distracting love;"

the reader will not be surprised that Anselmo, notwithstanding his vaunted determination of for ever contemning that power, should now feel it for the beautiful Almeria, whose personal charms were indeed her least perfection. The count had arrived at the summit of his wishes,

wishes, the height of glory and renown; Happiness was far from being an inmate in his breast; he pursued her, but still she avoided him. The thoughts of Anselmo then turned to woman, supposing her the presiding deity of that enviable sanctuary—the temple of felicity; cherishing that idea in his mind, it became at length certain conviction, that without woman, and that woman an Almeria, he should be for ever miserable. To enumerate the various devices of Anselmo, by which he hoped to obtain the heart of her who had with magic power so long held his in adamantine chains, would be endless. None, however, tended so much to the completion of his wishes as the gratitude Almeria felt for his former kindness; shewn, too, at a period when the rest of the world (from the misfortunes of her husband) had forsaken her. The friendship of Anselmo, therefore, at such a time, appeared invaluable. For so inconsistent is the

mind

mind of man, that too often they pay adoration, and bestow their kindness, to those alone who are already favoured by fortune, although it does not prove of the least benefit to themselves; indeed the reverse is sometimes felt to be the consequence.

The visit of count Anselmo to madame de Montauban, at Florence, raised him yet more in her estimation; his conversation was at times pathetic, and even solemn, whilst, in a most respectful manner, he praised her exemplary character, and the warm interest he should always take (observing how much her happiness depended on it,) in the welfare of her son. Suffice to say, that by such promises, constant assiduity, and trifling acts of friendship, Anselmo effected more in a few months than some men would have accomplished in years—he obtained the hand of the beautiful Almeria. St. Orvillé had tried to dissuade the count from pressing his

his suit until the mind of his sister should be more at ease; but in vain: for she having referred him to her brother, as being determined not to acquiesce without his consent, Anselmo's irresistible powers of eloquence overruled all his objections. He stated likewise to St. Orvillé, that it was his intention of retiring with her to the castle of Valleroy; to mix no longer in the affairs of government, as his health, as well as Almeria's, required repose, and the comforts of a domestic life.

Finding that the completion of the count's wishes rested only with him, he gave his consent to their union, and shortly after they were married, in a private manner, (according to the request of Almeria,) at Florence. The count and countess then took an affectionate leave of St. Orvillé, left Albert for the finishing of his education, and then set off with their attendants for Valleroy. Lauretta accompanied them;

but poor Claude, who by no means a
proved of the second marriage of his mi
tress, had expressed a desire to be take
into the service of her brother; which b
ing agreed to, on the same day that th
count and countess commenced the
journey to the Apennines, he and h
master took their departure for Geno

CHAI

CHAP. IV.

E quella á i fiori, á i pomi, e á la verzura
Gli ador diversi depredando giva,
E de tutti facera una mistura
Che di suavita á l' alma notriva. ARIOSTO.

THE delightful season of an Italian spring was now beginning to throw its lustre, and to reanimate all Nature's works. The country displayed one continual scene of rich cultivation; woods, mountains, lakes, and silver streams, intermingling through the verdant plains, shaded by trees of elm, almond, and mulberry, and intersected with vineyards, were at once presented to the eye, to charm and diversify the landscape. As

the count and countess proceeded nearer to their destination, the melancholy of Almeria appeared to increase; in her mind, confused and agonizing thoughts were constantly recurring. The late events that had taken place, during her short residence in Florence, and which had so indelibly fixed her future destiny, seemed as a dream out of which she was fearful of being awaked. When the carriage began to ascend the lofty mountains of the Apennines, and the country, hitherto glowing with luxuriant beauty, now changed to a barren uncultivated waste, all dreary and forlorn, Almeria, no longer able to command her feelings, burst into a flood of tears. The count, whose discontented brow shewed too well the displeasure he felt at her behaviour, desired the postillions to stop, and leaving Lauretta with the countess, alighted, and proceeded to walk onwards to the castle.

The poor girl endeavoured to console the

the agitated spirits of her mistress, by saying she was sure the count Anselmo loved her, and therefore, although the situation did not seem the most pleasant in the world, "yet, my lady," she continued, "you know where love dwells, it always turns a prison into a palace."

This artless speech of Lauretta's had not the effect, however, of calming the troubled mind of Almeria, who continued to weep until the carriage had arrived at Valleroy. Anselmo then came to conduct her into the chateau, observing, as she alighted, and taking her hand, that he hoped discontented and gloomy thoughts would never again obtrude, to chase away the happiness she might now enjoy. With a faint smile, Almeria answered—"I hope not, my lord."

The count then proceeded to lead her through the spacious hall, into a saloon, which, for grandeur and magnificence, excelled every state of an eastern prince,

or the most wonderful productions the beholder could form in his imagination. The ceiling was painted to represent the deities of the heathen world, encircled with garlands of flowers, and from which suspended elegant girandoles, doubly reflected by the pannels of Venetian looking-glass that surrounded the apartment; the chairs and sofas were of burnished gold, with vases of the same for flowers and odoriferous perfumes; the carpet of tapestry, and of the most exquisite texture; two cabinets of ivory, inlaid with precious stones, were placed in niches, and which held refreshments of the choicest wines and fruits; rich curtains, composed of silk and gold tissue, tastefully decorated the windows, from which was beheld a garden blooming with all the productions of Flora; and beyond that the view was terminated by stupendous mountains, whose tops, covered with snow, formed a striking

ing contrast to the luxuries that were so profusely displayed in the castle of Valleroy.

They partook of an elegant collation which was prepared for them; and after it was finished, the count, as was his usual custom, retired for some hours to his library, leaving Almeria to the care of her servant. Lauretta, although so new an inmate of the chateau, had learnt an infinite quantity of news to impart to her mistress, but which, on perceiving the countess inclined to sleep, she was obliged to delay the information. With great care, then, Lauretta threw a veil over Almeria, to prevent the light from disturbing her repose; and anxious to hear more of the history of the castle, she softly glided out of the apartment.

The sun, now sinking far into the western ocean, tinged, with its setting rays, the ancient towers of Valleroy; and the evening zephyr, gently sighing in the adjacent grove, wafted a cool and refresh-

ing breeze, to revive the languor felt from the noonday heat; the lovely star of eve, glimmering in the blue ethereal, began to lead the silent host of heaven along; and soon the silver queen of night rose majestically in the vaulted sphere, and darted its milder radiance on the still-sleeping Almeria. Lights were now brought into the saloon, and the count shortly after entered the apartment. Yet Almeria slept. A dream, (the strange incomprehensible attendants of the human mind,) had conveyed her far distant from her princely residence, even into the prison of Oristagni, and in which Montauban appeared to view, pale, wan, and torn with agony, as on that fatal hour she parted from him. Once again did she receive his last embrace, and once again did he repeat the words he had uttered with such fervency of—"Oh! Almeria, if success attends not your suit, return, oh! return to me; hasten to cheer the

afflicted

afflicted spirits of your Leontine, who only lives for you—my boy too! my soul's comfort, dearest Albert—oh, impart to him, with this kiss, his father's blessing!" Then did she reply aloud—"Montauban! my heart breaks to leave you!"—when a sudden ejaculation from the count, of no very pleasing import, chased away the delusive phantom, and Almeria awoke to the sad reality. She started from her couch, and looking stedfastly at Anselmo, (which seemed to imply at first that recollection had not yet come to her aid, but that she conceived him to be Montauban,) and then by her exclamation of "Where is he?" that she had lost him, Anselmo angrily demanded who she meant? This second question recalled her bewildered senses. Almeria sighed heavily, and taking her handkerchief to conceal the tears which had involuntarily flowed, replied, "Pardon me, my lord; fatigued and listless, from the excessive

heat of the day, I fell asleep, and have had an unpleasant dream; I could not, therefore, instantly recover the fright it had occasioned me." The countess then, with much ingenuousness, related to him the visionary scene, which had so greatly affected her. Anselmo was silent; turning over the leaves of a book which lay on the table, he began to peruse the following lines—

"Why all this toil, for triumphs of an hour?
What though we wade in wealth, or soar in fame?
Earth's *highest* station ends in 'here he lies,'
And 'dust to dust' concludes the noblest song."

Reading, however, had lost its wonted charms to Anselmo: he laid down the volume, and continued for some time apparently in deep thought; when the countess, supposing (although unconsciously) that she had offended, took up her lute, and began playing a Venetian air, in so enchanting a style, that it recalled the count from his reverie, and

the unusual gloom which had spread over his countenance.

Two years then passed away, without any material occurrence at the castle deserving attention. The calm and obscure way of life led by Almeria, restored, in some degree, her mental sufferings: at the end of the third summer of her residence in the province of Tuscany, she obtained permission of the count to invite Albert and her brother to spend a few weeks with them at Valleroy.

During their stay, which by the request of Anselmo was prolonged from the period they intended for their departure, the health of the countess daily improved; her heart dilated with pleasure in the society of Albert and St. Orvillé, whose mild and benevolent disposition softened the asperity which at times was observable in the count's behaviour to Almeria, occasioned by her too ardent attachment

(as he called it) for her son. Anselmo's arguments on that subject were, that such partial fondness of a mother must tend to make a boy effeminate, ridiculous, and unfit for the service of his country, in which he thought Albert ought to be now actively engaged. The count would then contend with his wife, that the study of the schools and their disquisitions only rendered men sceptics, argumentative, and assuming: vain braggarts of the quantity of learned nonsense with which their heads were supplied with, they passed their time in composing amatory odes and sonnets to their mistresses; describing passions, never existing, perhaps, but in their own wild imaginations, and obtained from books; thereby picturing human life exactly contrary to what it really is—"Instead, I say, of such trivial girlish employments," continued Anselmo, "would they perfect themselves in more noble

noble attainments, they might become useful members to society, and acquire lasting honour and renown."

Hopes of renown, however, in the general acceptation of the phrase, for Albert, had ever been far from the wishes of his mother; she had too fatally experienced the fallaciousness of such hopes, in the misfortunes which had attended his brave father—"Montauban," said she, "had nobly fought, risked all, for the public good, his life, his fortune, and every thing that was most dear to him on earth. He acquired renown; yes," continued Almeria, her spirit rising as she spoke, "Fame rose him to her highest pinnacle; when, in an unlooked-for hour, the moment of enjoyment from his hard-earned labours, the canker-worm of envy, jealous of his deserved happiness, despoiled him of his good name, his liberty, and every worldly comfort; nor yet, perhaps, would have been glutted with its vengeance, had not Death,

Death, the iron hand of Death, tore him from her fangs; and his noble spirit, once again free, flew for ever to the realms of bliss. Oh, my lord," continued the agitated mother, "do not then persuade my son to follow his poor father's fortunes; sooner would I behold him tending in the fields his little flock, and his only residence a neat herd's cottage, than see him master of a palace, where, too oft, the fiends of Care and Discord reign."

Such being the animated sentiments of the countess, Anselmo forbore, for the present, urging his proposition concerning the young Montauban, who was likewise a warm advocate for a military life.

These unpleasant contests St. Orville could not always conciliate with the same effect, particularly when he found that his nephew was so extremely desirous of entering the army, in which an important circumstance now happened to forward

forward that intention. News arrived at Valleroy of a signal defeat having been sustained by the Vaudois and Piedmontese troops. The French having possessed themselves of Lucern, and great part of the surrounding country, their brave commander, no longer able to contend with the enemy, had been obliged to fly with his small remaining force to Carignan; and that without an immediate supply of fresh troops, they must be annihilated, and prince Eugene, the noblest pride of the Italian nation, fall a lamented victim, or enchained to the car of the conqueror, be led captive to the gates of Paris, to enhance the dear-bought victory.

Albert, at hearing this account, exclaimed—"I feel for them as a man, and burn with ardour to revenge my country's loss;" and continued, impetuously, "oh, my mother, you cannot, you will not, now oppose my wishes for to meet this implacable enemy! In such a distressing juncture,

juncture, every true patriot's bosom must glow with eagerness to unite in the common cause, when our laws, our liberty, and the lives of our fellow-citizens, are endangered by a hostile invader." Almeria, observing the maddened fervour that agitated her son, and which, being heightened by the count's all-powerful eloquence, which, like an impetuous stream, bore down every thing that impeded its progress, appeared no longer within the bounds of reason, she remained silent, inwardly lamenting the cause that had produced it. Montauban, perceiving his mother affected, said respectfully—"Believe me, dear madam, no earthly consideration whatever should have induced me to risk your displeasure but in this one instance—the imminent danger of my brave countrymen."—"Yes," replied the count, "they certainly claim your consideration: friendship shewn from man to man, in the hour of peril, is a godlike act, and deserves

serves the world's applause."—"And yet, my lord," repeated Albert, "I hope I shall never forget, that justice for them must, at the same time, be tempered with mercy to their enemies." The count then embraced Montauban, and promised that a commission should be obtained for him immediately, expressing, at the same time, his reluctance, that, from his indifferent state of health, he was prevented following the young soldier to the field of battle, from which Anselmo had often returned crowned with laurels.

Before a month had expired, the count procured from his sovereign an appointment for Montauban, who, instead of returning to Florence with his uncle, now departed for the seat of war in Piedmont. He took an affectionate leave of his mother, and conjured her to be comforted during his absence. But the agonized feelings of Almeria at parting from her son were almost beyond

the

the power of language to describe. T
derly embracing him, with much d
culty she said—" Farewell, my Alb
may Heaven protect you !" and then
tired to solitude and tears.

CHAP. V.

"True, she is fair; oh, how divinely fair!
But still the lovely maid improves her charms
With inward greatness, unaffected wisdom,
And sanctity of manners."

A LONG interval now elapsed since the departure of Montauban, and excepting one hastily-written letter, dated Calgarga, acquainting his mother of having joined his regiment in good health, no account had been since received from him; and therefore the fears she entertained for his safety daily grew more and more insupportable. The count at first ridiculed her anxiety, but finding that had no effect, his temper, easily irritated

irritated and ungovernable, began warmly to remonstrate such childish behaviour, as he termed it, so unbecoming a woman of her sense and apparent resolution. Then would Anselmo reproach her with indifference and want of affection towards himself; and this idea that he cherished, so detrimental to his peace of mind, became truly distressful to Almeria, who looked forward to the future with the utmost fear.

The eighteenth month of Albert's absence had commenced, and yet no tidings of him. St. Orvillé wrote sometimes to his sister, but as he was now occupied in forming an alliance with the eldest daughter of a Venetian senator, his letters were in general filled with praises of the object of his admiration, and therefore very slightly mentioned his nephew, except in expressing his wishes for Montauban's welfare.

One evening, towards the end of July, the inhabitants of the castle were unusually

sually disturbed by loud and repeated knocking at its gates, and on demanding the cause of it, a monk belonging to the abbey of St. Julian requested an interview with count Anselmo. Almeria, whose thoughts were incessantly occupied about her son, desired that he might be instantly admitted; and turning to her husband, said—"Oh, my lord, this man, no doubt, is the bearer of a letter to me from Albert."—"No, madam," replied the count, with sternness, "Lodovico is the bearer of a letter to me." He then commanded the servant to take lights into the north chamber, and immediately left the saloon.

During his absence, Lauretta, then in attendance on her mistress, informed her, that the stranger was confessor to the adjacent convent of Santa Maria, in which was confined a most beautiful young lady, and some people did say that the count was in love with her. "Impossible!" replied Almeria; "you do not tell me true."—"No, my lady,

not

not for certain," answered Lauretta "but you know what great folks do, little ones will talk of; and therefore it has been thought strange that the count should support a fine young woman, for so many years, and not say neither who she is, who she belongs to, nor where she is come from: indeed," continued the facetious girl, "the old housekeeper says, that when you suppose my lord is gone to the library to study books, he is gone to study something of much more consequence, as he is always seen to walk towards an old building; and——"—"Silence!" repeated the countess, with anger; "I'll hear no more." For although this information of Lauretta's had somewhat alarmed for the moment, yet she wisely reflected how very little dependence ought to be placed on the intelligence obtained from domestics, and therefore determined not to credit an account so injurious to her future happiness.

Anselmo entered the saloon shortly after,

after, and ordered Lauretta immediately to depart with Lodovico for the convent of Santa Maria. "Me, my lord?" said the terrified girl.—"Yes, you; obey my orders this instant!" repeated the count. Trembling with fright, and whilst looking towards a window opposite the saloon, she exclaimed—"Oh dear, oh dear, the night is so very dark! no moon, nor one single star, I do declare! I am sure I shall tumble into some dreadful cavern; may I take a light, my lord?" —"Begone," answered Anselmo, with fury. Poor Lauretta then immediately left the room, and began telling her beads with the utmost devotion, not having the least doubt but that her master had overheard what she had been saying, and therefore that she was going to be locked up in the convent, as well as the lady.

In passing the hall, she saw Lodovico waiting for her under the portcullis. "Holy virgin!" exclaimed she, "there

is the devil, I am sure; and he is going to lay hold of me, that's for certain. Oh that ever I should have come into this infernal, terrible, frightful-looking castle!" The monk, perceiving how unwillingly she was advancing, said hastily —"Are you ready?" Immediately altering her tone, she answered—"I am coming directly, only permit me to procure a lanthorn first." Lodovico replied he had one, when turning the spring of it, the light appeared, and discovered to the agitated fancy of Lauretta one of the most ferocious countenances in nature. Having now, however, approached the portal, she tremblingly followed him over the drawbridge, and he then taking fast hold of her arm, with the greatest speed directed his course to the monastery.

Anselmo observed the surprise of the countess at this occurrence; he therefore, on Lauretta's leaving the saloon, began to unfold the reasons which had actuated

actuated him to send her. "It is needless," he said, "to enter into a minute recital of former events, which would be tedious, and of course uninteresting; the principal, however," continued the count, "I shall now acquaint you."

Almeria listened with profound attention, and Anselmo thus began:—"About twenty years since, travelling from Arezzo into Piedmont, with a mission for that government, my carriage was stopped by four men on horseback; they wore masks; and two of them presenting pistols into the windows, enforced my silence, by saying, that 'if I offered to make the least resistance, my life should be the sacrifice.' As money did not seem to be their immediate object, I demanded to know their business? They made no answer, but one of them rode off a few paces from the road, and dismounting, entered into a kind of hut; shortly afterwards, the man again appeared, holding in his hand a bundle;

with which he joined his companio
and delivering it to the one that w
stationed at the other door of the c
riage, which was then open, he plac
it on the seat, and exclaimed—' Nc
you are again free!' At the same m
ment, they all darted into the thick
part of the adjoining wood, and we
invisible in an instant. Surprise," co
tinued the count, " fixed me in a stupc
when casting my eyes on the parcel,
saw it move. The postillions desired
know whether they should proceed?
commanded not, until I had discover
its contents; when to my great astoni
ment, I beheld a female infant. It w
asleep; and from its neck was suspende
ribbon, which fastening a small piece
paper, contained these words, written
the French language—' *Eleanor, a ch
entrusted to the bosom of fostering huma
ty.*' I took it into my arms, and made a v
to Heaven that I would be its protect
The angelic countenance of the infan

fanci

fancied was animated by this exclamation, for it beamed upon me a smile of seraphic import; and then leaning its head on my shoulder, again sunk into forgetfulness.

"I ordered one of the postillions," said the count, in continuing the history, "to explore the wretched habitation from which the child had been taken, thinking it might serve as a clue to unravel so mysterious an incident. The man, on his return, acquainted me that the hut was quite deserted, and retained the appearance of having been only a stable, as there were several mangers. No hopes, therefore, of acquiring any intelligence from thence, I conducted my little charge in safety to the next post-town, where having, at a very short notice, procured a nurse for it, we continued our journey to Piedmont. In a few months afterwards," said Anselmo, "on my return into Italy, I confided the child to the care of a respectable family at Milan, with whom

she has been an inmate until withi these six years, when, for the advantag of a superior education, I gave orde that my adopted daughter should b removed to our convent of Santa Maria.

A look of incredulity from his wif succeeded this information of Anselmo's indeed, the whole account appeared t her improbable, and as such, not deserv ing of the least credit. The count ha observed the various expressions whic had taken place in her countenance, bu had not until now deigned to notice i With sternness he said,—"Do yo doubt, madam, the truth of my stat ment?"—When Almeria, with great a dress, and peculiar softness, replied, "M lord, I am not conscious of ever ha ing related a falsehood; why, then, d you think I should doubt yours? This evasive answer somewhat calme the anger that was rising in the breast o Anselmo, who thus continued—"It ce tainly was not my intention to introdu

Eleano

Eleanor at the castle, had not Lodovico informed me of her serious illness; I have therefore sent orders to the convent for her to be immediately brought to Valleroy. You, madam," the count then said, "will, I hope, be to Eleanor (what she has never yet had the felicity of knowing) an affectionate mother; believe me, she will merit your tenderest care;" and was continuing, when the bell at the outer gate of the castle, and the sound of the carriage rolling under the portcullis, announced to them the arrival of the fair invalid. Anselmo hastened into the hall, and almost immediately after, he conducted the orphan into the presence of Almeria.

The countess instantaneously rose to embrace the young stranger; but the fatigue, added to the sudden change from the walls of a monastery into so splendid an apartment as the saloon of Valleroy, entirely overcame her; she leant on the bosom of Almeria and fainted. Elea-

nor was then led to a sofa, and shortly after, from a restorative administered by the countess, again brought to life. The innumerable tapers that blazed threw a brilliant lustre on her interesting form, which was of the truest symmetry; her fine dark eyes, emanated by the celestial spark of virtue, now beamed with intelligence, and the tender sympathy of an immaterial soul. The sylph-like figure of Eleanor, rivalling even the models of Grecian art, was enveloped in a robe and veil of the finest texture, which, shading in part her beauteous face, somewhat confined the profusion of auburn hair that fell in graceful ringlets over her bosom; and from which, suspended by rows of pearls, hung a magnificent cross of diamonds, imparting a dazzling brightness on her delicate (I may say) angelic countenance.

As reclining in the arms of the countess, Eleanor now said, in the softest accents—"Dear lady, accept my thanks;"

and

and then turning to Anselmo, who was seated at the other end of the couch, exclaimed, "And as to you, my father, (for by that appellation she had often called him), how can I ever sufficiently acknowledge, much less return, the gratitude I owe for your goodness!"—"No return I wish for," interrupted the count, "except obedience to my commands; for this night you have taken a last farewell of the monastery."—"My lord," replied Eleanor, with the utmost emotion, and repeating his words, "a last farewell of Santa Maria? that revered abode, in which so many happy years have glided away in love and friendship—never to see it more!"—"Unthinking girl!" ejaculated the count, with extreme displeasure, "do you murmur at my first decree? what can possibly have attached you to a monastic life, comprised as it is of eternal sameness? you imagine, perhaps, to be shut out from the world, and passing days and nights in never-ceasing

vigils, in the gloomy cloisters of a convent, that is the road to heaven! For shame, Eleanor," he continued; "self-interest, I observe, is alone your motto; but do not deceive yourself with such fallacious hopes; with religion must also temptations be surmounted, benevolence displayed, and actions tending to the general good of mankind. All these, I say, are required, ere you can attain the summit of felicity. The gods laugh at those who, having no power to be otherwise, extol their fancied goodness, and claim for it a reward. No, no, Eleanor; virtue must be tried, before it can be accepted. If, then, (as the shining gold which endures the fire's heat, and comes out pure and undefiled,) its genuine worth is proved, a glorious recompence is the due, and an everlasting fame is its portion."

The countess now interposed in behalf of the lovely orphan, who, trembling at the warmth in which Anselmo had spoken,

poken, and grieved at the melancholy injunction, sat dejectedly silent. Almeria then represented to her husband the very ill state of health of Eleanor, and the natural regret that every young person must feel at parting with associates of their own age, whose juvenile ideas must be more consonant to them, than the cooler reflection of maturer years—"Yet, my lord," she continued, "I think I can distinguish in the looks of your adopted daughter, a mind irradiated by wisdom, which will ever teach the necessity of submission to your commands:" when the countess particularly addressing her, for an affirmation of what she had said, Eleanor respectfully bowed an assent to it.

Anselmo soon after left the saloon, to confer with the monk, who was waiting for him in the antichamber; and the ladies then retired to their separate apartments for the night.

CHAP. VI.

Satin, parva res est voluptatum in vita
Atque in tale agenda
Præquam quod molestum est, ita cuique comparatum
Est in ætate hominum.
Ita Diis placitum, voluptatem ut moror comes consequatur
Quin incommodi plus malique illico tadsit boni si obtigit quid. PLAUTUS AMPH.

.....

How short, how trifling, are the joys of life,
If with the evils that it brings compar'd!
This is the state of man, decreed by Heav'n—
That all his pleasure shall be mix'd with pain,
And lasting woe succeed each short delight.

ANONY.

THE morning dawn now began to beam his oriental light on the castle of Valleroy; and

and the warbling choir, renovated from their listless state by the genial warmth of summer, melodiously filled the adjacent groves with heaven-taught harmony. The gentle current of the Arno, meandering through these rich domains, glistened beneath an unclouded sun; and the misty vapours of the night gradually disappearing, gave to the surrounding landscape renewed and luxuriant beauties. The matin bell of the neighbouring convent of Santa Maria, swelling with deepened tone along the vale, now awoke from uneasy slumbers the lovely Eleanor. Accustomed to its well-known sound, the pious foundling instantly prepared to attend its summons, and some time elapsed before she could divest herself from the idea of still being an inhabitant of the monastery. The splendid apartment which Eleanor at present occupied, afforded to her no charms in the least, to compensate for the one she had left; and therefore,

seating herself at the window which commanded a distant view of Santa Maria, and looking towards it with tearful eyes, exclaimed—"Beloved abode! sacred to friendship's inspired name, must I never again be permitted to visit your calm retreats, your holy sanctuary? hapless Eleanor!" she continued, "what sad destiny awaits thy future years?"

The countess, who at this sentence entered the apartment, to inform her that breakfast was in waiting, was grieved to observe her very pallid and languid countenance; she therefore requested Eleanor not to leave her room until her health was more recovered, and that she would send Lauretta to attend on her. Solitude, at all times congenial to the taste of our orphan, was more particularly so at present, being really indisposed, and her mind, from some inward cause or other, heavily oppressed with melancholy. Tenderly embracing the countess, she said, "With your permission,

sion, I shall indeed prefer remaining in my chamber for some days, if you will offer and apology for my absence to the count, whose anger I should be extremely sorry to augment by any inattention to his commands." The assurances of Almeria, however, that Anselmo no longer bore any displeasure, and the promise she gave to pass some hours every day with her young charge, till she was enabled to quit her apartments, greatly relieved the afflicted spirits of Eleanor; who, on being again left alone, began to seek for some amusement, in perusing a favourite poem. Reading was always a source of never-failing pleasure; her sensible and feeling heart gave additional beauties to the works of an author; and when perusing the celebrated Tasso, her imagination would soar above the reach of circumstances, and create delight, even when all earthly happiness seemed fled for ever from her.

Lauretta shortly after entered with coffee,

coffee, and making a low curtsey to Eleanor, began saying, with much apparent consequence, that she was appointed to be her attendant—"And indeed, my lady," she continued, "you will find me perfectly well qualified, for my mother was a *femme de chambre*, and my father was a *valet de chambre*, and my brother was not one, because he was mad, and therefore he, poor boy, turned poet, and was soon provided for; Antonio wrote some verses against the great lords' ladies in Paris, which they did not like, and so they sent him to prison, and there, I dare say, he will ever remain. Well, thanks be to Heaven, I have no learning!" exclaimed the loquacious girl. Eleanor could not forbear smiling, when she congratulated herself on not having acquired so dangerous an accomplishment; and sympathizing at the fate of her brother, she asked if there was not a hope of her family being able to procure his release? "Oh dear no, my lady,"

lady," said Lauretta; "if they did, they would directly be sent to keep him company. Ah, signóra!" she continued, "if I was to tell you all of poor Antonio's story, your heart would be sad indeed." On Eleanor's, however, assuring Lauretta that she had excited in her great curiosity to be acquainted with his history, she thus began:—

"Well then, my lady, you must know, that I, as well as my brother, was born in Paris; he is now twenty-five, and I am six years younger. At the time of my birth, my father was in the service of the German baron de Holstein, who hearing that he had a wife and two children to support, the baron engaged my mother to attend on his sister, the lady Constantia, a very good mistress too she was, for permitting my mother to have me with her; and likewise sent my brother to school at her own expence. I have often heard my mother say it was the happiest period of her life; but alas!"

alas!" continued Lauretta, sighing, "I'm afraid all pleasures are of short duration; for in the third year of our being in that family, the baron de Holstein died; and the lady Constantia was so melancholy after the death of her brother, that she left Paris almost immediately, and departed for Germany, where we have since learnt of her retiring into a convent, and of having taken the veil."

"Unfortunate Constantia! such an event must have deeply affected her!" exclaimed Eleanor; "but had she no husband, no other relations than the baron?"—"Not that we have ever heard of; my father and mother continually inquiries about the health of our benefactress," replied Lauretta, "from her agent in Paris, with whom she has left a yearly pension for them; and as it is regularly paid, my parents have been enabled, by the addition of a little farm they purchased near Versailles, to support themselves without going again to service;

service; and likewise to procure for Antonio, who was reckoned very clever at his learning, a situation as clerk to a merchant in Paris; and then commenced all my poor brother's misfortunes, for—". The saloon-bell, however, now summoning Lauretta to the countess Anselmo, it obliged her to defer the continuation of the history until the evening, when she would again be in attendance on Eleanor.

On descending into the hall, she met the old housekeeper, who accosted her with—"Come, come, girl, here will be stirring work for you soon; the count, my master, has orders from the duke of Savoy to set off immediately for Turin, and all the men-servants are to go with him, excepting Philippe, and that senseless block Francisco."—"Holy Virgin!" exclaimed Lauretta, "what's the matter? which way is the wind now, Theresa?"—"How should I know?" replied she; "I only know that my master is in a great bustle, and that we are all sent flying about,

about, like chaff out of a barn door
get things ready for his journey."
bell now rang violently a second ti
"There, girl, that's again for you; co
come, do you run down to the coun
whilst I run up and deliver a messag
signora Eleanor."

On Lauretta's entering the saloon,
count demanded to know the reaso
her not attending the first summons?
in making an excuse for it, said
only stopped, my lord, to help up
old housekeeper, who in her hurry
tumbled down." She was then ord
to go to the pavilion, and acquaint
mistress of his wish to speak to
every thing being prepared for his
parture.

Almeria at that time having been
prized of the order received by Ansel
was employed in writing a letter to
son; but on Lauretta's informing her
message of the count, she hastily fo
up the paper, and returned to the sal

Ansel

Anselmo, embracing her, said—"I must now leave you, my love, for the business that calls me to Turin admits not of the least decay."—"Do you suppose your stay will be long?" replied Almeria.—"Not more than a few weeks, perhaps."—"And will you then be the bearer of this letter to Albert, as you say he is now in the fortress of Montmelian."—"Certainly," said the count; "but the purport of it?"—"A mother's fears for the safety of her son, my lord, and reproaches for his disobedience; nothing more, believe me."—"Oh, oh," replied Anselmo, laughingly, "if those are the contents, I can easily imagine the reception it will receive, Almeria."—"As to that, I am perfectly indifferent; if a child is neglectful of the duty to a parent, it is their duty to inform them of it; for slightly indeed can they hope for success through life, if wanting in respect to those who claim it by the first and most sacred tie on earth."—"Well, well,"

well," said the count, "I will give it him;" and then hastily bidding her adieu, Anselmo, attended by a numerous retinue, took their departure from Valleroy.

At the intimation of the count's intended journey by Theresa, Eleanor anxiously requested to be led to the saloon, that she might take leave of her kind benefactor, who, as she affectionately exclaimed, had acted to her the part of a father. At the concluding word of this sentence, the old housekeeper began to entertain new and various conjectures of Eleanor; and from several former occurrences, which had so mysteriously taken place at the castle, she began to believe that the signora would turn out to be no less than a daughter of count Anselmo.

Theresa, now, therefore, was extremely obsequious to Eleanor, conducted her with great care to the countess, who received her with unfeigned pleasure, but yet

yet expressed a fear that she had left her chamber too soon, and that her health might suffer for her politeness. On Almeria's acquainting her that Anselmo had already departed from the castle, Eleanor, particularly desirous of obtaining her friendship, answered, that she found her health much better, and therefore requested permission to be her companion during his absence.—"Your kind offer I embrace with delight," said the countess, "and would challenge you for a walk in the evening, was I not afraid that it might increase your indisposition."—"Oh no," she replied; "indeed it will not, but be of infinite service." This proposition agreed on, the countess observed shortly, with satisfaction, that her young friend's malady appeared to arise rather from dejection of mind than any real illness; the roses, which had been chased away from her cheeks, now began to return; and blending with the transparent white-

ness

ness of the skin, gave to her countenance all the grace and animation of a Hebe.

"And when fair wisdom joins in the design,
The beauty of the whole result's divine."

The day glided away in happiness to Eleanor, and would likewise have so passed to the countess, had not anxiety for Albert, and some latent uneasiness respecting her husband, prevented it.

A declining sun now emitted his last rays through a cloudless sky; the distant landscape was softened by the dews of eve; and a gentle gale, whispering amongst the trees, breathed delicious perfumes. From the loveliness of the weather, and beauty of the prospect, the walk of Eleanor and the countess was extended far beyond their original intention. On turning a point of rock, they observed to the left a cavern, excavated out of the mountain, and composed of granite; the entrance to it

was

was shaded by almond and olive trees; the ground overspread with rosemary, lavender, wild thyme, and various aromatic shrubs. The curiosity of the ladies excited them to explore this hollow recess; when Francisco, who attended them, began to expostulate against their proceeding—"Honoured mistress," said he, addressing the countess, "that cave is haunted by evil spirits; for I do assure you," continued he, trembling, "the peasants declare, that on returning to their homes at night, they have seen several gigantic spectres walking about with torches in their hands, and that their heads appeared to touch the ceiling; they sometimes play on several sorts of music, and——"

"No more of such a ridiculous story, I beseech you, Francisco, but follow us."—"Had I not then better remain at the door, my lady?" replied he, "that in case you should be run away with by those gentry, I may be ready to give the

the alarm?"—"Pray let him do so," said Eleanor, smiling; and then turning to the old man, exclaimed, "Be steady at your post, Francisco, and call out vociferously, if you think there is any danger."—"That I will indeed, young lady," replied he.

On their entering, the curiosity of the countess and Eleanor was amply gratified, and their pleasure converted into amazement when they, beheld the majestic columns and noble pillars which supported the fabric; they were partly mutilated, but yet, from their radiant whiteness, appeared extremely beautiful; and the sparry icicles which were suspended from the vaulted roof, resembled wax tapers, and did indeed throw on the whole structure an appearance of enchantment.

Whilst the countess Anselmo was admiring the magnificence of the place, and contemplating on the wonders of rude uncultivated nature, Eleanor's attention

tention was diverted to a distant part of the cave, where stood the figure of a saint carved from wood, in one hand holding a crucifix, and in the other a book; on a column, near the statue, was placed an hour-glass, a torch which seemed but just extinguished, and a small ivory box. Curiosity prompted her to open it, to discover its contents, when the sound of an approaching footstep, followed by a deep sigh, caused Eleanor to exclaim, although supposing it to be the countess—"Dear lady, why will you frighten one so?" The faintness of Almeria's voice, however, in answer, and her exclamation of—"Where are you?" now convinced the trembling girl that she was not the object of her alarm. With uncontrollable swiftness, therefore, Eleanor regained the door, calling out, "Here, here," when passing Francisco, almost breathless with fear, she said—"Oh, save your mistress!" upon which the poor fellow, although not able to

stir from the spot through fright, bega to cry out vociferously—"Help! help thieves, murder, and robbery! O dear, oh dear, the countess and I sha be killed. Help! help!"—"For Hea ven's sake," replied Almeria, who ha joined her attendant, "what is all th noise for, Francisco?"—"Why, honou ed lady," said he, hesitating, and fallin on his knees for pardon, "the youn signora informed me the ruffians—th apparitions I mean, had got hold of yo my lady.' 'And so,' says she, 'Fran cisco, do you stay where you are, onl make a great noise.' And I am sur I did make a great noise, my lady, for am quite hoarse with calling out so louc ly."—"And where is Eleanor?" repeat ed the countess, with anger.—"Tha indeed, I cannot tell, my lady; I saw th signora fly across yonder orange-grove but what has become of her after that don't know."—"How extremely ridicu lous is such behaviour! Come, sir,

continue

continued Almeria, "follow me to the grove then, that we may endeavour to find her."

Their search, however, proved in vain. Every cottage, hut, or dwelling-place, in the vicinity of Valleroy, was explored by Francisco and his mistress, without success. All hopes, therefore, of finding the fair fugitive having expired, and night advancing, they returned to the castle. The countess, in the utmost distress of mind, inquired of the steward if he had seen Eleanor? On being answered in the negative, she then directly ordered Francisco to repair to the monastery, faintly supposing that she might, in her alarm, have taken the path which led through the intricacies of the Apennines to Santa Maria.

On regaining the saloon, Almeria took up a book, to wile away the hours that Francisco must necessarily be absent. Some time, however, having elapsed, and yet no intelligence arriving of either,

the uneasiness of the countess beca
so excessive, as at length to determi
her to wait no longer the return of t
servant, but to depart herself for t
convent. Accompanied, therefore, o
by Lauretta, she again left the cast
and proceeded towards Santa Mar
The moon, just rising over the mountai
was of a deep red, and surrounded
dark clouds touched with flame; a f
trembling stars shone in the hemispher
but gradually disappearing, from the i
creased brilliancy of their superior p
net, they at length left her sole empr
over the skies. The wind in gentle mu
murs died away; not a single zeph
sighed amongst the trees, to disturb t
stillness that reigned around; all natu
was at peace, save some few airy inhal
tants of the night, that occasional
flitted across the path, and in dulc
melody proclaimed their artless loves.

On the countess and Lauretta a
proaching into a private track, whi

l

led a nearer way to the drawbridge, the former involuntarily started: the sound of a lute was heard in the adjoining temple. "Ah," said Lauretta, as the strain continued, "it is an evening hymn to our blessed Virgin! Surely, my lady, it is the signora that is playing on purpose to terrify us;" but instantly recollecting herself, she resumed, "yet that is not probable, for I have heard Theresa say that the temple has been locked up for many years, by a strict order from count Anselmo, and no person permitted to enter it on any account whatever."

"That injunction we must obey then, Lauretta," said the countess; "yet it is strange; the sounds evidently come from thence; and look," repeated Almeria, "do you not observe a figure gliding by the windows? Now it stops. Ah! I fear some dreadful history belongs to that temple."—"Indeed, my lady," she answered with trepidity, whilst looking

towards it, " I do see something m
about, all in black, and without a
I am sure, instead of advancing c
the castle, we ought to make a s
return into it, my lady."

The countess, although possess
sufficient resolution in general to
every danger (from the proud cons
ness of innate rectitude), yet the
ous incidents which had taken
with such rapidity, within the last
ty-four hours, were distressing an
ful. The arrival of Eleanor, scarce
nounced at Valleroy before she is
lost; the sudden departure of her
band for Turin; the unpleasant
which had happened at the cavern
last of all, and most terrifying, w
mysterious inhabitant of the te
which, notwithstanding Almeria's k
been more than three years a resid
the castle, had never before atti
her attention, except once duri
walk with the count, who merel

swered the inquiry, by saying it had formerly been appropriated for a bath, but then, of no further service, being completely uninhabited.

The sublime strain now finished, and the figure was instantly lost to the sight of the astonished Almeria and her attendant. The concurrent events in so short a period, and retrospection of the past, now forcibly affected the countess Almeria: with faltering voice, and tearful eyes, she said—"My good girl, from the respect I think you have for me, I charge you not to mention to your fellow-servants, nor to any other person, one word respecting what we have seen this night; such a disclosure, if heard of by the count, would deeply irritate his feelings, and perhaps be the means of your instantaneous discharge from my service: yet," continued Almeria, sighing, "although such must be the secrecy attendant on the affair, we will, if it is possible, procure a key of that temple, and

then explore the mystery which enve lopes it." Lauretta, apparently agi tated from the conclusion of this sen tence, the countess consoled her by say ing—" Fear not the effect of supernatu ral agency, which, in reality, has n existence, but fear the effect that ma be produced from human villany ; ther lies the evil. When man, great rule of this ephemeron world, conspires, wit deadly hatred, against his brother mar wide-spreading devastation must be th baneful consequence." Almeria, how ever, on perceiving the pale and fright ened looks of her servant, and likewis thinking it might be imprudent to ven ture by themselves to the monastery, a length consented to return to the castl

In their walk through the grove c linden trees, which was opposite th eastern windows of Valleroy, the sounc of music were repeated, fainter than be fore, yet not less sweet. A few rapi chords being struck by a masterly hanc

th

the air commenced with peculiar grace, imparting an expressive wildness of fancy in the execution, altogether grand and pleasing. "Hark! the lute has begun again," said Lauretta, who now was more courageous as she continued to approach the castle; "indeed, my lady, I think it is the signora."—"I know not what to think," replied Almeria, "yet let us then advance nearer this invisible musician, and be convinced."

On their turning into a path from whence the sounds proceeded, it was almost darkened by interwoven branches which entwined each other in soft embraces, and on whose boughs the liquid note of a nightingale had begun to chant her pl[illegible]ive song to the listening moon. [illegible]ween an interstice of the grove, nea[illegible] fountain whose gentle spring sup[illegible] a small marble bason, and surrou[illegible] with flowers of the most delightful [illegible]ume, stood a kind of hermitage. [illegible]ing the noonday heat, it

had always been a favourite retreat for Anselmo, to indulge in meditation and study.

"Here, plung'd amid the shadows brown,
Imagination lays him down;
Attentive, in his airy mood,
To ev'ry murmur of the wood;
The bee in yonder flow'ry nook;
The chidings of the headlong brook;
The green leaf quiv'ring in the gale;
The warbling hill; the lowing vale;
The distant woodman's echoing stroke;
The thunder of the falling oak.
From thought to thought, in vision led,
He holds high converse with the dead."

To this romantic and melancholy abode then, Almeria now [illegible]nt her steps. The music instantly ceas[illegible]and her exclamation of "Eleanor, [illegible]d "where are you?" was followe[illegible]a terrific scream of her attendant, [illegible]being at a short distance from her m[illegible]ss, called out—"There it flies towards [illegible]temple!" and

and continued—"Oh, my lady, I shall certainly die with fright if you will not quit this terrible place." All the countess's expostulations to Lauretta, in hopes of calming her disturbed imagination, had no effect; the poor girl fancied she had again seen the spectre. She was therefore obliged, however unwillingly, to yield to her remonstrance of regaining the castle, where, however, no Eleanor or Francisco had yet arrived.

Wearied and unhappy, Almeria then re-entered the saloon, flung herself upon a couch, and shed tears abundantly, whilst reproaches mentally afflicted her, for ever having consented to become the wife of Anselmo. His mysterious conduct, and sometimes cool treatment towards her, so unlike the tenderness, the love, she had experienced from the gallant but unfortunate Montauban, bore heavy on the already-distressed mind of the countess. Past years were reflected upon with deep-felt anguish, future ones with

insupportable terror. As the timid dee therefore, flies from the hunter's cr and seeks for covert in the fosterin shades, far from the haunts of men an its wild pursuers, so did Almeria wish t be immured, and to weep away her lif alone and unobserved, in the friend nook of some distant mountain.

Such sad thoughts as these succeedir each other with astonishing rapidit drove her almost to madness. With wil ness exclaiming—"Why, my lord, o why could not my gratitude be returne in some other way than this? Had been possessed of the riches of Golcon da's mines, you should have had them a —all, Anselmo, to have repaid the obl gation I owed you; yet they would n have been enough; no, myself mu likewise be the sacrifice, and therefo am I doomed to endless misery;" con tinuing in a frenzied manner, "wretche Almeria! My son, too, dear Albe hates his mother for this second ma riage, and sedulously avoids her."

"Heaven

"Heavenly powers!" ejaculated a voice, that now struck motionless the heart of Almeria—"Avoid you! not for worlds would I avoid you." The countess now turning round to her auditor, beheld with astonishment and ineffable delight the object of her only hope, her dearest Albert, kneeling at her feet for pardon, and pressing with fervour her almost lifeless form.

Almeria held out her hand towards him as a token of forgiveness; would have spoken, but could not; utterance, indeed, seemed totally denied to her; again looked, sighed heavily, and nature then being quite exhausted, she fainted in the arms of her son.

"Oh, my mother! my beloved mother!" continued the agitated Montauban, "revive, oh, revive, to bless your Albert, whose existence is no longer valuable than whilst it tends to prolong the life, and promote the happiness of his parent." These cheering and consoling

soling words gradually restored the b
wildered senses of the countess; whi
clasping Albert to her breast she e
claimed—"Image of your dead fath
the brave Montauban! oh, my boy, l
lives again in you! judge, therefore, tl
agony of your mother, from your lor
absence, and yet greater for the cause th
produced it. War! destructive war
she continued, "which engulphs who
nations in one dreadful scene of slaug
ter, tearing the husband from his wif
the child from his parent, destroying tl
happiness of thousands; and all for
satisfy the wild furor, the unsatiated an
bition, perhaps, of an individual."

Every endearment, every kind attet
tion, did Albert then have recourse t
in order to sooth the perturbed spiri
of his mother; yet still the fate of Ele
nor continued to distress and perple
her. The countess, therefore, commu
nicated to Montauban, in very fe
words, the history of their short ac
quaintanc

quaintance, and the orphan's sudden and mysterious flight.

At this intelligence, it was with difficulty Albert could be retained from going in pursuit, even before she had mentioned the place most probable to find her—the monastery of Santa Maria.

"Not a moment should be lost, dear madam," exclaimed the young soldier, as he now ran, or rather flew, to remount his horse, which, with his servant, was in waiting at the gates of the castle, and who offered to attend him; but Montauban, hastily declining his services, set off full speed, and was out of sight in an instant.

CHAP. VII.

" His days appear a constant scene of joy;
Gold glitters in his precious robes;
His pride's as boundless as his wealth;
He never wounds the air with mournful sighs;
The voice of harmony salutes his ear,
When he lies down to sleep; and when he wakes,
Triumphant plenty, with a cheerful grace,
Basks in his eyes, and sparkles in his face."

WHILST Albert is employed on the friendly mission of endeavouring to regain the lovely fugitive, we shall pursue count Anselmo to the castle of Oldenzo, previous to his journey into the province of Piedmont, and elucidate the apparent cause for the dark shade of embarrassments with

with which he was surrounded. On that day, a letter arrived at Valleroy for Anselmo, of a most distressing nature: it was from signior Rodolphus, the successor of the count (by his express recommendation to the duke of Savoy) in his senatorial capacity. Anselmo and Rodolphus were on the strictest terms of friendship, from the intimacy which had long subsisted between their families, and the contiguity of their residence in Tuscany. Both were Italians from birth, and each were alike distinguishable for personal bravery and attachment to their country. In consequence of the derangement in the affairs of Rodolphus, after the decease of his father, and the displeasure that his mother felt at his marriage with a German lady of obscure birth, he had for some years absented himself from Italy, and chiefly resided in the French dominions. On the death, however, of his mother, and the high post occupied by his friend, the count, at the illustrious court

court of Savoy, who promised to procure him an eligible situation under the government, he returned with his family, consisting of his wife, one son, and a daughter, into Italy, and took up his abode at his paternal mansion, near Grossetto, in Tuscany.

As Rodolphus will bear no inconsiderable part in this history, a few striking features of his character may now be thought necessary, to form the judgment of the reader as to his pretensions for successfully supplying the place of such an active and profound politician as the count Anselmo, whose loss was generally lamented. Signior Rodolphus possessed great erudition, was well bred, particularly versed in the manners of the courts of Europe, and thoroughly acquainted with their various forms of government. Being also master of several languages, he was proficient in a florid kind of oratory, which imperceptibly led, without apparent design or intention,

intention, the disposition of his hearers to coincide with him in any act that he projected; and although naturally possessed of a sullen and unforgiving temper, if ever thwarted in any of his favourite pursuits, yet we must attribute to him great boldness in his enterprizes, as entertaining a sovereign contempt for danger. In this latter trait he resembled his friend, though with some slight difference: Anselmo's temper partook too much of that impetuosity of Rodolphus, which often rendered him headstrong and ungovernable, both in his words and actions: the latter, more prudent, seldom gave way to the heats and bursts of passion; for his quick-sighted sagacity endued him with a presence of mind suitable to all emergencies, whilst his friend was often too much elated by the events that bore a prosperous aspect, and too depressed or desponding under those whose appearance were adverse.

Rodolphus

Rodolphus never despaired; Hop
ways sat triumphant on his brow, a
every misfortune; and a point
determined on in his mind, was nev
linquished; no, not even at the l
of life. Anselmo frequently in
more to the advice of others, wh
thought either more sensible, or
informed on the subject; but Rodo
never; self-confident, he acted wi
sitive and determinate firmness; a
that account, in the deranged st
the affairs of the country at that p
Rodolphus was unanimously judg
be the most able, most competent
cessor of count Anselmo. Such
seemed certainly formed to be a
helm of the government, wher
people were beginning to be fa
and divided, jealous of the pov
aristocracy, and yet sunk into s
state of apathy and indolence, t
required much foresight, great pru

and strong energy of mind, to rouse them to a due sense of their impending danger.

Since the marriage of Anselmo with madame de Montauban, from some incidental cause, neither Rodolphus or his family had visited Valleroy; yet not from any apparent difference having arisen between them, for seldom a week was suffered to elapse, when signior Rodolphus was in Tuscany, without Anselmo's being a guest at the residence of his friend. It was now, therefore, on the return of the latter from Turin, that he immediately wrote to the count, requesting a conference with him, and likewise advising the expediency of Anselmo's repairing to that capital without loss of time, as unpleasant rumours had been circulated much to his disadvantage, and the public opinion had of late been expressed with great virulence against Anselmo, respecting his marriage with the widow of general de Montauban, together

together with retiring from office when his services were most required by his country. Rodolphus thought it, therefore, highly proper, he said, that his friend should appear in person at the court of Savoy, to refute the injurious charge against his honour, and repel the foul aspersions of his character.

The contents of this letter no less agitated than astonished the count, because four years had been suffered to expire since those events had taken place, and until this period not even the slightest sound of defamation's voice had ever reached the knowledge of Anselmo; but being now undoubtedly traduced, and by that means his character materially injured, the count also thought it advisable immediately to set out for Turin, and to solicit an interview with the duke of Savoy, for the purpose of procuring, if possible, the names of those persons by whom he had been calumniated.

On

On his departure from Valleroy, the count and his retinue first proceeded to the castle of Rodolphus, where he was received with every demonstration of friendship. On his entrance into the grand hall, which was hung round with military trophies and other warlike ensigns, he was welcomed by the wife of Rodolphus and her son, an elegant young man, then in his twentieth year, and in person and manners greatly resembling his father. Ernestine Rodolphus had been an officer in the same regiment with Albert de Montauban, yet no cordiality subsisted between them; indeed a most disdainful conduct had been manifested towards each other; and in consequence of that, and a recent quarrel, Rodolphus challenged Albert: they fought, and the latter being wounded, as was then supposed seriously, prince Eugene, from the great respect he entertained for Montauban, ordered that his antagonist should be immediately

mediately cashiered; and therefore R
dolphus thus retired from the army
disgust.

Anselmo having been apprized by t
elder Rodolphus of the disastrous term
nation of the duel, and of the resignati
of his son in consequence of it, he a
dressed a very severe and sarcastic lett
on the subject to Albert, who, high
incensed at such an unjust remonstran
from the count, when it was so w
known that Ernestine Rodolphus was
aggressor, he, in the heat of passi
without the aid of reason, or the le
consideration, returned for answer c
equally spirited and indignant; and h
the temerity to reproach Anselmo w
the undue influence he had contrived
obtain over his mother, for the purp
of receiving the honour of her hand
marriage; that his wealth, titles,
splendour of his residence, and the pu
lic voice of fame, which were all attach
to the count, might perhaps be con
der

dered by the generality of her sex as baubles worthy their acceptance; but that his mother, a woman endowed with such superiority of sense and personal accomplishments, the widow, too, of his father, the late general de Montauban, by her they would ever be considered as dross; and the day, the hour, that witnessed the solemnization of their nuptials, had (he believed) fatally consigned his mother to unceasing regret, and to eternal misery.

On the receipt of this letter by the count, his rage knew no bounds. He made a solemn vow to renounce Albert for ever, and to deprive him of all claims on his fortune and estates, which, in order the more effectually to gain an interest in the heart of Almeria, he had settled on her son previous to their marriage. This determination of the count was sent in his own hand-writing to Montauban, with this injunction likewise—"That at his peril, he should ne-

ver again dare to appear at Valleroy, o
any account whatever; that if he wa
seen, even in the precincts of that place
his life should be the atonement for hi
audacity."

This dreadful mandate did not in th
least terrify or come unexpected to A
bert: yet he deeply regretted the co
sequent deprivation of his enjoying th
society of his beloved mother; fro
another circumstance, too, he inward
reproached himself with having been th
occasion of such a severe sentence fro
the count Anselmo; yet his pride rose s
predominant to every consideration o
personal interest, that any acknowledg
ment, or confession of error, was deem
by Albert as derogatory to his honou
and to him far dearer than life itself.

Thence was it to be ascribed the no
receival of letters from him at Valleroy
he had oft written to his mother, but s
oft were they intercepted by the coun
and no communication whatever, direc

ed to her, was to be delivered without his express permission first obtained, and examining their contents. Anselmo was certainly so far prudent in not making known to the countess the displeasure he felt towards her son, who had ever been regarded by the count with jealousy and suspicion; and the late indignity he had received, confirmed more strongly the aversion Anselmo had before entertained of him. The renunciation of Albert, and denial of access to the castle, was the ostensible motive which actuated the count to send for Eleanor from the monastery, in hopes that her soft manners, her mild and obliging behaviour, would tend to console the mind of the countess, and divert from the uneasiness which had possessed it, by the protracted absence of her son.

A few weeks previous to the departure of Anselmo for Savoy, the presence of Montauban was required at Turin, to

attend a military council. He therefo left his regiment in the suit of prin Eugene; and on their arrival at the ca tal, his royal highness immediately intr duced our young hero at court, with express recommendation, for his brave and his good deportment, since he h been under his command; and in co sequence, Albert de Montauban was mo graciously received by the duke Savoy, who deeply deplored the loss t army had sustained from his father death, and yet the more for the occ sion that unhappily had produced th event. The duke then went on to sa "That every method had been r sorted to, from which they might ho to discover the calumniators of the d ceased general, in whose cause th country had of late been particularly i terested." The name of the count Ans mo was then mentioned by the duk with extreme displeasure, and some e planation concerning him seemed to b

expecte

expected from Albert. Revenge was now in his power; yet did the upright mind of the young soldier scorn to indulge in his breast so unfair and unmanly a gratification, as that of injuring the reputation of the absent. On the contrary, in answer to his sovereign, Montauban sought to palliate even the indiscretions of Anselmo, by saying, his health certainly required repose and retirement; and as to the marriage of his mother with the count, he thought their affection mutual—gratitude actuating the one, sincere love the other.

It would not have been possible for Anselmo at this juncture to have had a more powerful advocate than Albert de Montauban, whose character, at this early age, and short period of being in the army, had risen high in the estimation of his profession, and entitled him to the gratitude of his countrymen; but what had tended more than all to endear him to these, and to claim his sovereign's

thanks, was his signal prowess in pres
ing the valuable life of his royal c
mander. At the commencement of
career, Albert was ordered, with a det
ment of Piedmontese troops, to n
a sortie from the fortress of Montmel
and during the time he was successf
engaged with the enemy, Montau
observed at a distance prince Eug
who was arriving with only two at
dants, to inspect the fortress in disg
surrounded by a party of French
who had been laying in ambush an
some vineyards. With an incredible
locity, Albert immediately mounted
charger of a French officer whom he
wounded, his own having been sho
the rencounter, and hastened to the
sistance of the prince. Plunging thro
the ranks of the enemy, and dea
destruction with his sabre to th
who opposed his progress, Montau
arrived just in time to ward off f
his defenceless chieftain the deadly b

that was levelled at him, and to bear him off triumphantly from the dastardly, the astonished crew. One of the followers of the prince was slain; but the other, through the valour of Montauban, escaped in safety.

Having experienced the most distinguished marks of royal favour during his short residence at the capital, Albert rejoined his regiment, which was then in the neighbourhood of Turin, they having some time previous been compelled to evacuate the fortress of Montmelian, through failure of the necessary supplies, and a contagious mortality reigning amongst the troops of the garrison.

In returning to the reception count Anselmo met at the castle of Rodolphus, it may suffice to say, no expence was spared by which its inhabitants could demonstrate the cordiality and the friendship which subsisted between them. Signior Rodolphus, who had been enjoying the sports of the chace, now arrived to

welcome the count; he was then in close conference with Ernestine in the saloon, who (his mother having retired to give orders to the domestics) was informing Anselmo, with deep concern, from a promise of secrecy, of the fatal cause of the quarrel between him and Montauban. On the entrance of his father, Ernestine abruptly changed the conversation, yet not without an intimation to resume it that night, if Anselmo would permit him to enter his apartment.

The usual compliments and expressions of kindness at the meeting of the friends being over, and after their having taken refreshment the best the castle could afford, Rodolphus requested a private conference with the count, who instantly followed him to the library, and where they remained in close converse for several hours. On re-entering the saloon, Rodolphus sought by various ways to amuse his friend, appearing at the same time unusually gay and sportive.

No

Not so Anselmo; a deep and profound melancholy hung over his brow; his ideas were often so abstracted, and his mind so completely absent from the present scene of mirth, that it required much foresight, and the greatest prudence, in the master of the mansion, to prevent his guest from uttering exclamations which it seemed Rodolphus thought better should be concealed. His daughter Lavigna, a pleasing girl, just emerged into fashionable life from the confines of a monastery, was now therefore commanded by her father to exert likewise her powers of vocal fascination, in the hope that music's powerful charm would tend to divert the count from his reverie. A national air, describing the love of an Alpine shepherd for his mistress, was then sung by Lavigna, with much pathos and judgment. The melody of the composition, though simple, was beautifully pathetic, yet it could not sooth or calm the contending agonies existing in the

breast of Anselmo. Rodolphus perceiving the evident uneasiness of his friend, immediately ordered lights to be brought, and then conducted the count to his apartment. A sullen silence was observed by Anselmo towards Rodolphus, who, on leaving him, exclaimed—"Are you a man? if you are, you do not behave like one." The count, however, heeded not this abrupt and singular question of Rodolphus, who, on finding his friend so completely lost in thought, and disposed for solitude, left him to his meditations.

Shortly after, Ernestine, who was true to his appointment with the count, knocked softly at the door of his chamber; having waited some time in expectation of admittance, a second signal was given by him, and then endeavoured to open it; but on finding it locked, he listened, and fancied he heard the voice of Anselmo, apparently moaning in great anguish. In the intervals of the sudden

gusts

gusts of wind, which kept blustering through the casements, and whistled along the hall with dismal sound, it was repeated with greater agony. "My lord!" now ejaculated Ernestine, with emotion, "are you indisposed? I entreat you suffer me to be a sharer in your grief, from whatever cause it unhappily arises." No answer was however returned to this kind intention of the youth to the count, who therefore finding all expostulation useless, and supposing the reason to be Anselmo's sudden and alarming illness, hastily descended to the saloon, with a communication to his father of their guest's indisposition. Rodolphus, who had so recently parted from his friend in perfect health, except being mentally agitated, for which he knew that solitude was the only remedy, and most efficient cure for him, began therefore to smile at these ridiculous fears of his son, as he termed it, and peremptorily commanded that the count Anselmo

should not again be disturbed from his repose.

In the morning, the family having met at the breakfast-table, and no appearance of the count, Rodolphus then ordering one of his servants to apprize Anselmo of the lateness of the hour, was informed by the domestic that the count had already taken his departure for Turin, without any of his attendants, who had, however, been desired to follow him with all convenient speed. Rodolphus inquiring of his servant whether the count had proceeded in his carriage? was answered, "No, my lord, on horseback." This strange and unexpected retreat of Anselmo produced no surprise from Rodolphus, who was accustomed to these singular flights of his friend; every thing, therefore, in a few hours, appeared restored in this mansion to its usual order and serenity.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

Domestic happiness, thou only bliss
Of Paradise that has surviv'd the fall!
Though few now taste thee unimpair'd and pure,
Or tasting, long enjoy thee; too infirm,
Or too incautious, to preserve thy sweets
Unmix'd with drops of bitter, which neglect
Or temper sheds into thy crystal cup. COWPER.

We will now leave Anselmo to visit the castle of Valleroy, where joy brightened the countenance of its inhabitants, from the appearance of our youthful warrior, whose presence had so greatly cheered the afflicted heart of his mother. We have likewise to say, that her anxiety respecting the fate of Eleanor was soon terminated,

terminated, by the second arrival of her son at Valleroy with the fair fugitive. On re-entering the saloon, Albert conducted the blushing girl to the arms of the countess, who received her with unfeigned pleasure and cordiality. Having been apprized by Montauban of the alarm that her absence had produced at the castle, and acquainting him with the real cause of her flight, confused and agitated upon the occasion, Eleanor possessed not the power, nor had the inclination, to defend her singular conduct; the task, the pleasing task, of being her advocate, in consequence was undertaken by Albert. He candidly stated to his mother, that the same instantaneous fear which had compelled her young friend to fly from the cavern, actuated likewise to prevent her knowing the leading path to Valleroy. "Wandering among the mountains, vainly seeking for the habitation of some human being to direct her to the castle,

and

and night fast advancing, you can well imagine," continued Albert to the countess, "the increasing terror of Eleanor in such a situation; but Providence, which never fails to protect the innocent, at last directed her to the cottage of an aged shepherdess, near the monastery of Santa Maria, where, being almost exhausted with fatigue, she knocked at the door, requesting admittance. On hearing the sound of a female voice, the old woman, with her daughter, (a young girl about fifteen years of age,) came out, and upon communicating her situation, kindly offered her their assistance. Your lovely charge, madam," continued Albert, "was then led into their little dwelling, and from them received the most hospitable treatment. The road I took to gain the monastery necessarily obliged me to pass that very cottage; and on alighting from my horse, to make inquiry for the shortest way to Santa Maria, I here met, with

with pleasure unexpected, the object of my search, dearest Eleanor." Confused, however, at having called her by so familiar an apellation, Albert was unable to continue the recital. The remainder of it was therefore left to Eleanor, who, with much sweetness of voice, her peculiar characteristic, acknowledged the obligation she felt for his kind care, in conducting her from the cottage to Valleroy, and the delight she experienced at being again restored to her benefactress.

The countess Anselmo being now relieved from those agonizing fears respecting the fate of her son and Eleanor, which had likewise so truly distressed her, became not only cheerful, but enjoyed for several hours, in their society, happiness devoid of inward sorrow—the latter too long the companion of the amiable Almeria. Montauban, however, had accomplished more in that day, from the speed with which he had performed his journey,

journey, than his strength would permit, considering the effects of the recent duel between him and Rodolphus, and the acute pain experienced from his wound. The ball had perforated his right shoulder, and from too great fatigue began to bleed afresh. For some time, Albert endeavoured to conceal the effusion, by twisting a handkerchief round it, and pretending drowsiness, that he might be permitted to retire soon to his apartment. The countess, on perceiving his wan and pallid countenance, immediately ordered lights to be brought for that purpose; and on Montauban's taking leave of his mother and her *protegée*, to the latter addressing himself with peculiar softness, Eleanor, who had hitherto been afraid of encountering the expressive looks of the young soldier, now ventured to raise her downcast eyes, to return his salutation, when, with a look of extreme terror, she exclaimed—" Oh Heaven, I am the unhappy

py cause of all this;" and with i faintness continued—" therefore sh be for ever miserable." The surpri the countess, from such incoherent tences proceeding from the lips of nor, could only be equalled by ob ing in an instant afterwards that she fallen lifeless into the arms of Mo ban.

In a moment of such consterna Albert became forgetful of every t around him but the lovely orphan tore off the handkerchief from his and with evident distraction of declared he would never survive loss. The mother's amazement was changed into horror, on observing her son was wounded, and appare too, bereft of sense, whilst with pressible agony he pressed to his the death-like form of Eleanor, who remained in a state of insensibility. countess immediately rang the bel assistance; and on the domestics att

ing the summons, they were scarcely less terrified than their mistress, who, with imploring looks and beseeching accents, was then persuading Albert to leave Eleanor to her care, that he might himself receive the aid he stood so much in need of.

The first that entered the saloon was the servant of Montauban; he likewise entreated his master to accede to the wishes of the countess—"Dear sir," continued the poor fellow, "pray suffer me to lead you to your chamber; indeed you are very ill." This last expression had the effect of recalling to animation the fainting Eleanor; she sighed deeply, but being too fatally convinced of the assertion of the domestic, again hid herself in his bosom, and burst into a flood of tears.

Montauban perceiving that she was recovering, now consigned her to the protection of his mother; to whom, in hopes of consoling her, he pronounced with cheerfulness,

cheerfulness, that his indisposition be trifling, was he but relieved of th he entertained of Eleanor's. The ap mutual regard of these young peop each other, during the short space few hours acquaintance, appeared so astonishing, and to the count perfectly unintelligible, that it wa difficulty she could find words ag solicit, if the entreaties of a paren at all to be respected, that he wo tire to his apartment. Almeria lil informed the object of her solic that a monk from an adjacent ce was sent for expressly to attend or being well skilled in the art of s and simples—"By whatever mal hand you have received your w dear Albert," continued the co "rest assured that a mother's p for the restoration of the health son will not be unavailing."—" madam," answered the agitated auban, "you must pray for the re

of Eleanor, for on her life depends that of your Albert's." When immediately, without waiting for a reply, Montauban, attended by Lupino, left the saloon; and on repairing to his chamber, there awaited the arrival of the stranger, from whom however he vainly hoped for relief. Mental anguish was the real wound which tormented the gallant soldier; and that malady, with only human foresight, appeared to him without a remedy.

It has been said, that perfection of character, were it possible to describe it, ought not to be represented; its very greatness, and the utter impossibility of acquiring that heavenly attribute here on earth, would probably deter the reader from endeavouring to attain it; such might amaze the mind, dazzle the understanding, and attract the attention for a season, but of such a season would be the termination of its existence. For the sake of example, necessity imposes the task of portraying faults, as well as displaying

displaying virtues, and that the latter should preponderate is as just as honourable to the feelings of an author, who always should endeavour, even amidst the lighter sallies of wit and humour, to inculcate morality, excite emulation, and at the same time, whilst they please the imagination, they may instruct and make the heart glow with the sentiments of virtue and distinguished goodness. In delineating, therefore, the character of Albert, although we shall find more actions worthy of praise than to condemn, we shall likewise, being but in the sphere of mortality, find many deserving of censure. His disposition, generous and noble, was, however, unforgiving, in those instances where he thought his honour sustained an injury; for then, not even the savage lion, who exults in human prey, could equal the fury of Montauban, when aroused to it by fell ingratitude or supposed insult.

This lamentable trait of character had now

now then an opportunity, too fatally for his own peace, of fully displaying itself, from the arrival of the stranger, who, on lifting up his cowl, discovered himself to be the friend of the count Anselmo, the monk Lodovico. Surprise, indignation, arising even to abhorrence, swelled in the breast of Albert, at the unexpected sight of this man, Lodovico being but too well known to him. "Well, sir," said Montauban, with peculiar dignity and contempt marked on his countenance, "to whom am I to consider myself indebted for the honour of your attendance?"—"To your mother, sir," replied the monk, with a seeming servility in his aspect, although inwardly hurt at such a reception; and on perceiving the rising indignation of Albert at this information, continued, in a less pleasing tone of voice—"Humanity, young soldier, was the watch-word that brought me here; but insolence, I now understand, is the countersign."

countersign."—"Humanity!" retort Montauban, with irony, "which yc have never practised, and know n what it means; away then with the an biguous phrase, and let your oracle l understood." To this singular rep and insinuation of Albert, respecting tl motive which could have induced tl monk to visit him, no answer was r turned. Lodovico arose from his sea and with one look he darted at Mon auban, in which was mingled contemp rage, and despair, he instantly quitte the apartment.

On descending into the hall, Lodovic met the countess Anselmo. Her affe tionate inquiries of the state of her son health was replied to by the monk wi every apparent mark of friendship- "Rest, rest, my dear lady," said he, " all that your son now requires: ga volatile, and heedless of any danger ari ing from his indiscretion, he has pe formed a journey in one day which

prude

prudent man would only have undertaken to have done in three: it has therefore brought on a slight inflammation in the wound; perfect repose, however, both of mental and bodily fatigue, will, I think, effect a speedy cure. At all times," continued Lodovico, bowing with great respect, "my advice and services are at your command: indeed, no greater pleasure could be conferred on me, by my noble friends at Valleroy, than to be enabled to prove this asseveration." An inquiry was then made by the monk after the health of their *protegée*; and on hearing from the countess that Eleanor, although far from being recovered, was yet more composed and easy in her mind, Lodovico again took his departure for the monastery.

To account for the unpleasant reception he had met with from Montauban, it will be necessary to relate some past

events which had taken place at castle, during the former visit of A to Valleroy.

CHAP. IX.

Ut vidi! ut peri! ut me malus abstulit aror. VIRGIL.

How have I yielded to the dear delusion!
I saw, and seeing, was undone for ever.

.....

Nought under heaven so strongly doth allure
The sense of man, and all his mind possess,
As beauty's lovely bait; that doth procure
Great warriors of their rigour to repress,
And mighty hands forget their manliness,
Drawn with the power of an heart-robbing eye,
And wrapt in fetters of golden tress,
That can with melting pleasures mollify
Their harden'd hearts, inur'd to blood and cruelty.

SPENCER.

AT the celebration of a yearly festival of the sanctuary of Santa Maria, the

grates were thrown open for the adm tance of strangers. Our young soldi having therefore expressed a wish be a spectator of the solemn ceremor of the high mass, St. Orvillé, who w likewise a visitor at the castle, readi consented to accompany him.

On their entrance into the chapel, t vaulted roofs were re-echoing the sublir devotional strain "*Del Festivo d' Di* then performing, replete with heaven harmony, by the holy sisterhood. T great altar, shaded by curtains of silv tissue, decorated with wreaths of flowe and surrounded with resplendent tape fumed delicious odours from its burni incense; the marble walls, beautifu ornamented with Mosaic mouldin were divided by palisades of massive ver, adorned with the finest tapestry, a tastefully embellished with paintings the most celebrated Italian masters. T gothic windows were likewise hung w drapery of silver-tissue, and the chan

li

fiers and censers of gold, ornamented with the most precious stones, and intermingled with silver lamps, reflected a dazzling, inexpressible lustre throughout the whole of this ancient and noble edifice.

To the mind of Albert de Montauban it afforded the most exalted pleasure; indeed, the witnessing of such a solemnity cannot fail of inspiring every beholder with the noblest feeling of the heart—gratitude towards his God. On every countenance sat the shadow of the Divinity, with benignant influence on all, save one solitary monk, who, as he kept leaning against an adjoining pillar, looked the image of Despair. To him, indeed, the soothing power of religious rites, and consolation of devotion, appeared wholly to have lost their charms, nor, for an instant, was it able to surmount the melancholy gloom which hung over his brow. The majestic figure of the man, and the singularity of

his appearance, soon arrested the attention of Montauban and his uncle. "Do you not observe," said Albert, "that poor monk by yon pillar? he seems strangely affected. On whom are his eyes fixed with such mournful aspect?"—"See you not," replied his relation, "that lady seated near the great altar, dressed in white, unveiled, and attended by one of the noviciates, who is now addressing herself to her?"—"I do, sir," answered Montauban, "and think her an angel: I never saw a more seraphic, a more angelic countenance."—"Well, then," continued St. Orvillé, "to her are they directed, whose beauty, I think with you, certainly surpasses any of mortal mould."

Before the conclusion of the service, the object of their admiration, with her companion, prepared to leave the chapel. Montauban was in an agony; one moment, thought he, and she will be lost to my sight for ever. He sprung from

from his seat and followed her. As they gained the door which led into the interior of the monastery, from the young lady's alarm on observing she was pursued by a stranger, she let fall her crucifix. Albert instantly caught up the prize, pressed it to his bosom, and kneeling, restored the precious relic to the beautiful noviciate. With a sweet smile, she was going to acknowledge her thanks for his gallantry, when the monk whom Albert had before noticed rushed towards him, and snatching hold of the hand of the lady, instantly disappeared with her. The iron door then closed with violence, to seclude from his sight for ever, as he supposed, the enchanting vestal.

The impetuous youth being highly incensed at the intrusion, and the indignity he had received from the holy father, began therefore to breathe forth imprecations against him of the most sacrilegious nature; and concluding, from

the monk's gaining admittance into the convent, that he was a confessor, he loudly condemned the whole community. After some time passed in this useless indulgence of his rage, and convinced that no hope remained of again beholding the object of his admiration, Albert endeavoured to retrace his steps into the choir of the chapel, to rejoin his uncle. By the light of a single lamp, which hung over the figure of a saint, and kept glimmering at a distance, he pursued his way along one of the aisles, at the same time remarking with astonishment the sudden gloom with which the place was enveloped, when it had recently presented so splendid an appearance. Not a human creature was to be seen, nor a single footstep to be heard. The farther he advanced the more dismal and forlorn did every surrounding object appear. Albert then began to think, and not before, of the very unpleasant, the dangerous situation,

into

into which, from his imprudence, he had brought himself, for it was evident, that during his pursuit after the holy sister and her young companion, the chapel had been cleared of its votaries, and the doors closed.

Montauban then reflected on the great uneasiness his flight must have occasioned his uncle, and the anxiety his friends would entertain for his safety; well knowing, that if he was found in the sanctuary by any of the conventuals, now the service was concluded, his life would be the sacrifice. Certain danger will intimidate the most courageous heart. Albert felt ashamed of his fears, yet could not conquer them. On turning through one of the arches, he was left in total darkness. Montauban then thought it best to return and take the lamp, the light of which might perhaps discover some secret door that would extricate him out of the chapel.

In hollow murmurs, the wind resound-

ed through the long aisles and d
vaults of the sanctuary: the faint
of the moon, which began to be
cernible from its gothic windows,
tended, however, to add fresh horro
the scene. Funereal implements,
numents of some of the departed s
hood of Santa Maria, and the unw
figures of the saints, which were pl
in niches along the aisles, were the
objects to be perceived by him. In
did he endeavour to approach the la
it was not again to be found; and
serving, likewise, that the farther h
vanced in search of it, the more glo
if possible, did every thing appear,
bert determined quietly to await
evil he could not avoid. He sat d
on a projection of one of the colu
and fixing his eyes on a distant winc
through which the moon now darted
rays with stronger lights and increa
splendour, began to invoke every g
spirit to bless him once again with

sight of the lady, who had so fascinated his senses that he imagined he could endure even the greatest torments with composure, and with rapture, if the reward would only be one look of pity from the woman he loved.

The bell of the convent now struck the midnight hour: shortly after, to the astonishment of Montauban, he saw the light which had before so miraculously eluded him; no longer, however, stationary, for it began to advance slowly towards that part of the sanctuary in which he was seated. Alarmed at this circumstance, Albert instantly arose, and with faltering step, receded to some distance, which enabled him to follow the lamp without danger of discovery. On turning through one of the arches, the light, however, passed him with great quickness, but not before he had sufficient time to recognize, in the person who held it, the same monk who had attracted his attention in the chapel dur-

ing service, and who had so forcibly interrupted his intercourse with the noviciate of Santa Maria.

The third appearance of this man, at such an hour, and near the same spot in which he had at first beheld him, struck Albert with the conviction, that the monk likewise had felt the power of her charms, and from being actuated by jealousy, was then come to satiate his revenge by assassination. Contending emotions agitated the breast of the youth, at the idea of falling by the hand of a single ruffian, with whom, had Albert been armed, by any means of defence, he would, in such a contest, have been more than equal, in point of valour, strength, and skill.

At one moment he determined to disclose himself, by mentioning his name and family, in the hope of intimidating the confessor, by daring him to the atrocious deed; at another, by some plausible story of distress, and grief at so unjust

unjust a confinement, to move his compassion. Whilst Albert was revolving these points severally in his mind, the object of his alarm continued to move with much rapidity, and, on advancing towards an iron grate at the end of one of the cloisters, he observed him kneel on approaching the image of a saint, and on rising, to take from behind the figure a key, with which he opened the grate. Montauban drew nearer, supposing that it was a subterraneous passage which led into the mountains; but in that he was disappointed; the iron door, creeking on its hinges, an immense weight, closed with violence; the monk then descended a few steps, and, by the ray of light which fell from the lamp, Albert discovered it to be a cemetery. Every hope then vanished of effecting his escape: the confessor, on entering into that place of death, disappeared in an instant, and again was Montauban left in total darkness.

No gleam of moonshine then broke through the dismal structure to guide the wanderer to a place of repose; the wind, blustering through the antique windows, with mournful sound echoed along the cloisters. At intervals, groans were distinctly heard, and which seemed to issue from the cemetery. In an agony of despair, Albert then threw himself on the pavement; in that distressful situation, however, no useless repining, or violent expressions of anger, escaped his lips; and a heavy and unconquerable stupor, stealing by degrees over his senses, soon obliterated every idea of fear, by forgetfulness.

The well-known, ever-to-be-remembered maxim, which should animate every human breast, even in the most afflicting circumstances—"Rest on hope," was truly, was fully exemplified, and that in the fate of Albert de Montauban: he who on lying down on the cold stones, in momentary expectation of feeling the

the dagger of a secret assassin, on recovering his benumbed faculties, found himself in an elegant apartment, reclining on a couch, and close by his side, looking at him with the most ineffable tenderness, his mother and uncle, the countess Anselmo and her brother, St. Orvillé. This agreeable and unexpected change was hailed by the young man with every expression of joy, and great was his curiosity to learn by what fortunate occurrence he had been extricated from his perilous situation in the chapel. St. Orvillé readily complied with that wish, by acquainting Albert of his unsuccessful search, before he had ventured to return to the castle with the information of his flight from the sanctuary. Count Anselmo had thought it not improbable that, actuated by a desire of viewing the whole of the edifice, he might be in confinement there; and pointing out the danger of any person being found in the chapel after high mass

was

was concluded, had immediately determined them to depart for the monastery; and that on the arrival of the countess and himself at Santa Maria, by sending in their names to the superior, and the object of their mission, every polite accommodation was offered them, with an order from the abbess for her attendants to explore the sanctuary; which being complied with directly, they had found him in the melancholy state before described, and with their assistance he had had been brought into that apartment. After the conclusion of signior Orville's recital, some time yet elapsed ere they were enabled to convey Albert to Valleroy; feigning to be extremely indisposed, in hopes he should again be blest with a sight of the beautiful noviciate with whom he was already so deeply enamoured, his eyes were constantly turned towards the grate, in expectation of seeing her pass. The matin service being concluded, the nuns were returning

returning each to their cells; with the utmost attention, Montauban viewed them as they glided by, but not one answered the least in description to her he so eagerly sought for. Disappointed, therefore, in that hope, he almost exclaimed aloud—"Visionary idea! presumptuous mortal! to expect on earth an angel!" Those sentences were not lost to the ear of his uncle, although they were to his mother, the countess being then in conversation with the superior of the convent. With much significance of look and manner, Orvillé said to his nephew, "I do not think the air of this place agrees with you; I therefore advise a speedy return to Valleroy;" which then obliged Montauban to accede to the proposition.

The midnight adventure, and confinement of Albert in the sanctuary of Santa Maria, became a subject of much conjecture to the count Anselmo; the evasive and contradictory answers of the

youth,

youth, whenever questioned by hin to the motive of such temerity, crea likewise his severe displeasure. Mont ban perceived the alteration of count's behaviour towards him, therefore was the more anxious to le the name and family of the fair inc nito of the monastery, too plainly fe seeing he should not long be permit to remain at the castle of Valleroy. C tinued perseverance on the part of bert, aided likewise by his faithful serv Lupino, soon crowned his wishes w success—her name Eleanor, and adopted daughter of Anselmo. T latter intelligence, however, greatly pressed and agitated Montauban, be well assured, from the marked indi rence, and anxiety of the count for l to enter into a military life, that his tachment for her was known to An mo, and disapproved of. This unpl sant reflection could not, however, p vent the youth from continually dire

ing his steps towards the convent, and contriving, by various devices, to obtain the notice of Eleanor, by whom Albert soon flattered himself he was regarded with no small degree of partiality.

On an evening, he would sometimes repair to the walls of Santa Maria, disguised as a shepherd, and with an oaten reed begin playing the most elevated and enchanting strains of the pastoral muse. At other times, he would exchange that simple dress for the more secure one of a female pilgrim, by which he at last enjoyed the pleasure of conversing with her at the convent grate. Momentary, however, was that indulgence. Albert, fancying this religious costume would prevent suspicion, and therefore escape all observation, had, on the third morning of his admission to the monastery, persuaded the timid Eleanor to allow him to present to her, and tie round her neck, a ribbon, from which was suspended a golden heart, a token of his fidelity;

at

at that instant, the same monk who Albert had seen on the night of his con finement in the sanctuary, passed then and hastily retired into the conven Montauban, with much agitation, in quired of Eleanor what situation he hel there? and on being informed by th lovely orphan that he was their confe sor, exclaimed, with energy, "Bewa of him! I know the man!"—"Not an ther word," she softly replied, "we n observed;" and then speaking alou said, "May Heaven guard you, gent pilgrim! in my orisons you shall l remembered." Albert pressed to h lips the lovely hand of the noviciate silent gratitude. Words would ha been superfluous, his looks sufficient expressed the reverence, the adorati of Montauban, for the arbitress of l fate. Eleanor sighed once more adieu, which was responsively echo in the heart of her lover; who then s rowfully retraced his steps to a neig

bouri

bouring cottage, where he again assumed his proper dress. The owners of it, an elderly woman and her daughter, (and the same before mentioned,) being entirely in the interest of the youth, afforded him every consolation. Floriseé, the younger, who was a vender of fruit to the convent, likewise assured Montauban that she could obtain daily intelligence of the signora, being intimately acquainted with the Beguines of Santa Maria, (an inferior order of the conventuals,) and that he might depend on her for secresy.

On Albert's regaining the castle, he was met by the count Anselmo, who congratulated him on his appointment as lieutenant to one of the principal regiments of the Piedmontese troops; the commission had arrived that morning at Valleroy, signed by the duke of Savoy, with an order for Montauban to join the army without delay, the service of the state requiring every possible exertion to renew

renew and preserve its wonted splendou This command from his sovereign I well knew must be immediately cor plied with; Albert, therefore, on reti ing to his chamber, addressed the follo ing letter to Eleanor, as he did n think it prudent to appear so soon agai at the monastery.

" MY BELOVED ELEANOR,

" The duty I owe to my cou try, revered Italia! bids me hasten rescue it from the threatened grasp of lawless invader; yet, although honour the breastplate of a soldier, love is h protecting shield; deprived of th soul-inspiring sentiment, soon, ala would the laurel fade and wither on t hero's brow. Listen, then, oh, liste with attention, to what my fond hea dictates for your welfare. The pe trembles in my hand; tears of angui

ill my eyes at the thought of absence, nd pronouncing farewell to all my che- ished hopes; those hopes, which, I now onfess, sought to enslave the mind, and ngenerously draw forth, from the lips f Eleanor, a vow, which might embitter ll her future days. Yet, amidst all the oils, all the hardships, to which I may e exposed, how cheerfully would they be ndured, if sometimes I could receive he pleasing assurance that I was not uite forgotten by her whom my soul dores! On the return of every eve, hen religion's hallowed rites call you orth to the sacred altar, will Montauban, n idea, be with his Eleanor, will dedi- ate it to pray for her felicity. Oh, then, et the warning voice of sincere affec- ion entreat, conjure you, to be on your uard against pretended friendship— he name without the substance; it is f all evils the most afflicting in its con- equences. The guileless heart, open, enerous, and unsuspecting, is too often found

found to be the prey of duplicity. nastic seclusion is not always a p tion to youth and beauty, for vice more dangerous when concealed the specious garb of virtue.

" To-morrow I depart from Val deny me not then, beloved Eleano melancholy satisfaction of once seeing you, and receiving from y fiat of my fate—the happiness, or misery, of

" ALBERT DE MONTA

This letter had a safe conduc the young Florisee, who, conceal amidst the flowers of an elegan quet, presented it to her at the c grate; and although Albert had n mission of the count Anselmo to his visit at the castle, he had on his adopted daughter to visit San ria, at some future period; accom with every testimony of her rega

ven

veneration for the gallant soldier. Fears for the personal safety of Albert induced Eleanor, at that time, to forego the pleasure of another interview with her lover, some suspicion having arisen amongst the conventuals respecting his assumed disguise. Montauban, who had therefore been anxiously waiting at the cottage of old Florisee for the return of her daughter from the monastery, received this latter intelligence with great despondency; yet, as it conveyed to him the hope of meeting with his Eleanor at some distant period, her injunction was obeyed. The few lines which she had contrived to write with her pencil, and to send back by Florisee, containing fervent wishes for his happiness, and thanks for the very flattering deference he had expressed for her, were now then carefully folded up by Montauban, who, on concealing it in his bosom, exclaimed, "Live for ever here!"

Albert, on recompensing the female

cottagers for their services, charged them to be watchful and observant of every incident that might take place at the convent during his absence; which they having faithfully promised to attend to, he took his departure, his mind wholly occupied with the image of the fascinating Eleanor, on the succeeding morning for Turin; mentally rehearsing to himself, as he proceeded on his tedious journey to the capital—"Montauban! prove yourself worthy of your country, and the high distinction you have acquired from the object of your choice; deserve the prize before you attempt to obtain it!" All eager then, for glory, well might the youth have exclaimed, (with some slight difference,) in the words of the noble Hector—

> "If I should perish, let me perish great,
> And in a mighty deed expire;
> Let future ages hear it, and admire."

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

The mountain thunders, and its sturdy sons
Stoop to the bottom of the rocks they shade.
Lone on the midnight steep, and all aghast,
The dark wayfaring stranger breathless toils,
And, often falling, climbs against the blast.
Low waves the rooted forest, vex'd; and sheds
What of its tarnish'd honours yet remain—
Dash'd down and scatter'd by the tearing winds'
Assiduous fury, its gigantic limbs.
Thus struggling through the dissipated grove,
The whirling tempest raves along the plain,
And on the cottage thatch'd, or lordly roof,
Keen fast'ning, shakes them to the solid base.

THOMSON.

THE following winter, during a cessation of hostilities with the enemy, Montau-

ban procured a short leave of absen from his royal commander. With t greatest speed he set off for Tuscany, visit the countess Anselmo, from whon for reasons before stated, he had not re ceived any information. The fate o Eleanor pressed likewise on his mind with melancholy forebodings of ill for tune, not having received any accoun from her likewise since he had left the Apennines.

On the journey, Albert met by acci dent with St. Orvillé, who was travelling from Genoa to Placenza, for the pur pose of renewing an intimacy with the daughter of a Venetian senator, and to obtain consent of the father for their union. Montauban, on embracing his uncle, inquired, with much agitation, after his mother. St. Orvillé instantly calmed his fears on that account, by say ing he had received a letter from the countess, announcing she was in health, but unhappy, at not having heard from her

her son, except once, since his departure. Albert was going to reply, but his uncle, anticipating his answer, said—"I knew, and was perfectly convinced, that you would never fail in so indispensible a duty. Be on your guard; it is needless for me to acquaint you that Anselmo is not your friend: the adventure at the monastery of Santa Maria, and your confinement there, has excited his suspicion—his alarm, for in that holy sanctuary, you well know, is secluded his beauteous *protegée*, signora Eleanor. Strange reports have been circulated at the castle respecting her birth, and near relationship to the count." St. Orvillé, perceiving his nephew change colour at this intelligence, did not continue the subject further than entreating Albert not to appear at Valleroy, without an invitation from Anselmo, and likewise to banish from his mind, if he valued his mother's happiness, all recollection of the noviciate of Santa Maria, as the least

indulgence of such an attachment would produce an inevitable train of evils, both on himself and family. The first part of this advice was agreed to by the young soldier with but slight opposition; the latter met with a decided negative. Montauban had pledged his faith to Eleanor, and that consideration, to a man of his honour, was as binding as if it had been pronounced before a host of witnesses. In an impressive manner, he communicated the same to his uncle, and concluded by saying with much solemnity, "You perceive, therefore, honoured sir, the destiny of Albert is irrevocably fixed, beyond the power of change, in this world; if for misery, I ever trust that I shall submit without repining at the decree of Heaven!"—"Rash youth!" exclaimed St. Orvillé, "the vow you have made must be broken;" and continued impetuously, "Who were the parents of Eleanor?"—"I know not."—"Then farewell," replied St. Orvillé,

St. Orvillé, "I leave you to your fate!" and spurring his horse, rode off with incredible swiftness, leaving the astonished Montauban fixed to the spot like a statue. Several minutes elapsed before he could in the least reflect on the words he had uttered, to cause such great displeasure from his uncle; and when reason did return, and represent to him the occasion of it, the plighted word he had given of eternal fidelity to the orphan, surmounted, and rendered impracticable, every idea of conquering the fatal passion he had conceived for her.

With very different sensations, however, did Albert now pursue his journey to what he had done previous to the unexpected interview with his uncle. The peremptory command of St. Orvillé for him not to appear at the castle, (although his mother was suffering the utmost uneasiness, from his long absence and supposed indifference towards her,) was truly distressing. The intelligence of the

count's secret enmity, and the moti
actuated such resentment, from
he was denied even the consolat
writing to his beloved parent, li
caused Montauban the severest an

As ascending the lofty and ch
mountains of the Apennines, oft
he linger, and cast a sorrowing lo
the rich track of country that lay b
his feet—valleys clothed with eve
ing verdure; flocks and herds pea
ranging plains, which were pr
adorned with all the charms of p
landscape, to afford comfort and
to its inhabitants. Reflecting on th
trast of the scene he had quitted
which he was then immerging i
dreary, wild, and barren region,
by the winds of every quarter, offe
shelter, no equivalent, to compen
the least for so disagreeable a chan
bert involuntarily sighed; he fanci
presented his own untoward destin
divert, however, his mind from c

ally presaging misfortune, he would sometimes descry, and point out to his servant, as they proceeded, little fertile spots, even amidst these desolate mountains, covered with vines, and enamelled with flowers, and other rare productions of nature: he would then exclaim energetically—"Such is the life of man! to whom pleasures are but in perspective, real sorrow in the ground-work." Towards evening they gained the summit of the Apennines, and could discern, although as yet but a speck in the horizon, the sun's last rays gilding the ancient structure of Santa Maria. All care and despondence vanished from the countenance of Montauban at the sight of a place in which was enclosed his heart's dearest treasure: already, in idea, had he clasped the fond maid to his bosom; and already, at her feet, again breathed forth vows of love and constancy; to the fascinating, and, to his imagination, peerless Eleanor.

Albert, knowing it was not possible to obtain admission to the convent gate at so late an hour, therefore directed his steps to the cottage of Florisee, where it was his intention to remain during the night. On entering the little dwelling, the old woman, who immediately recognized Montauban and his attendant, received them with the greatest joy; but on observing a visible alteration for the worse in the health of her benefactor, she mournfully exclaimed —"Ah! my good lord, I am afraid you grieve for the loss of signora Eleanor?"—"What, is she dead?" reiterated the almost-frantic lover.—"Heaven forbid, my lord!" replied Florisee; "our amiable lady was alive and well yesterday se'nnight; I only meant to say that she has left the convent, and gone to the castle of Rodolphus." Distracting doubts now tormented Albert at this unwelcome intelligence. It was not easy to divine the motive which could have induced

induced count Anselmo to confide her to the care of his friend, in preference to a monastery; yet, when he reflected that at the period of obtaining leave of absence from his regiment, the son of Rodolphus had procured the same, jealousy, at that instant, represented, that for Ernestine, who artfully must have contrived to gain the affections of Eleanor, he was discarded; and that her visit to the castle was only a prelude to becoming its future mistress.

This conviction, of which no doubt he thought could be entertained, racked his brain with madness; without, therefore, debating in the least what steps would be most proper to pursue, Albert remounted his horse, determining to go in quest of Eleanor, at the same time charging his servant to remain at the cottage till morning, then to commence his journey for Grosseto, and there to await his orders. Heedless of danger, he instantly set off, and travelled through

the night, along roads hardly presse even by the foot of a passenger, eve moment expecting to be precipitate from the rugged rocks into the gulp which continually presented themselve to his sight.

At the approach of dawn, Albert wa so wearied and faint, for want of res and nourishment, that he could proceed no farther: his horse, too, which he had been obliged to lead for several miles, fell down on the road almost lifeless.

Montauban, though but ill able to exert himself, yet endeavoured to relieve the poor animal, by procuring some herbs and grass, which again enabled the faithful creature to follow his master. On observing some peasants a work in an adjoining vineyard, Albert hastened towards them, and requested their assistance. One of the vintagers, with much humanity, tendered his services, and conducted the young soldier to his dwelling, situated on the side o th

the mountain: here he was regaled with the best the cottage could afford, and accommodated with a bed. In a few hours he arose from his humble couch, greatly refreshed; and as his horse had been likewise well taken care of, was extremely anxious to recommence his journey to Oldenzo. Sensibly impressed with the kindness he had received from the mountaineer, Albert returned a grateful acknowledgement; and on remarking how much his lot was to be envied, which seemed to be that of true content, so difficult to be met with in the busy scenes of life, the hardy veteran exclaimed—"I do indeed, my lord, enjoy that blessing; my wishes are ever moderate, therefore easily attainable. I have known better days in point of fortune, but none so happy as I now enjoy. In early life I married the woman I loved. Ninetta, as well as myself, saw enough of the world and its vicissitudes to prevent regret at our leaving it.

it. Alas!" continued the old man, "if at any time we are dull and out of spirits, it is with the thoughts of having been deprived by death of our best friends. Strange events take place sometimes with surprising quickness; so was it with us, for in one single hour, from having a good house over our heads, and a comfortable independence, we were turned adrift, in a strange country, without knowing one being that we could apply to for relief: after wandering about, therefore, from place to place, and procuring a scanty subsistence for myself and wife, by working as a gardener, Providence," repeated Zilio, with peculiar energy, "to make short of my story, directed us to this spot; and to that same old peasant whom you applied to for assistance, we are indebted for our preservation: he procured me the situation I now hold with my present master, signior Rodolphus."—"Rodolphus!" eagerly interrupted Albert;

bert; "do you mean Rodolphus of Oldenzo?"—"Yes, my lord, he is my master." And on inquiring how far from thence to the castle? his informant answered, "Within half a league." With apparent indifference, Montauban then asked if the son of Rodolphus was at the castle? which was likewise replied to in the affirmative, and that he might have had the pleasure (Zilio supposing that Albert was acquainted with him) of seeing the young signior, if a few minutes sooner, he having but just before left the vineyard. An interview, however, under such circumstances, would have wounded the pride of Montauban, who felt, therefore, extremely gratified to have escaped a humiliating rencounter. Yet, if the foregoing intelligence excited surprise, and inwardly agitated the lover, how much the more was it when, during the relation of the mountaineer, he learnt that Ernestine was accompanied by Count Anselmo; and, on inquiring if there

there was any other visitants at the castle? the answer obtained was in the negative! "Are you sure of that?" said Albert.— "Quite sure, my lord," repeated Zilio, "for my wife daily attends at Oldenzo, and if there had been any other visitor besides the count, I should undoubtedly have heard of it."

Montauban now deeply lamented the precipitancy in which he had left Santa Maria, without further information than that so hastily acquired from the old cottager, whose loquacity, perhaps, might have unthinkingly revealed his attachment for Eleanor, and therefore been the cause of her strict confinement in the convent. To ascertain the truth of which, however, no means presented itself; his leave of absence being so nearly expired, the only expedient he thought at all practicable was, to return without delay, by the same road, and on meeting with his servant, to order him to remain for some days in the vicinity

of

f Santa Maria, in hopes of Lupino's arning the real abode of Eleanor, and, successful, to present her with a letter hich Albert previously had written expressing the fears he entertained of oeing forgotten) for the lovely recluse, before he commenced his journey; then having doubts on his mind whether he should be able to obtain a personal interview. This point once determined upon, Montauban lost no time to carry it into execution; he generously rewarded his host for the trouble he had occasioned him, and again remounted his horse, to traverse the dreary mountains of the Apennines.

In a few hours after his departure, the far-extended prospect became on a sudden wrapt in gloom, quickly enveloping every object with the hazy vapour. The mind of Montauban had been so occupied in devising plans for the future, that the present was totally disregarded; darkness increasing, and the terrific

terrific howling of the wolves, which, under cover of the night, were beginning to descend from the higher parts of the mountains in search of prey, at length aroused Albert from his reverie; he then found, to his great astonishment, that he was pursuing a different track to that which he had taken on the preceding day; the road led into a vale, which, with the torrents of melted snow from the heights, and long channels of sand, appeared like one continual sea; and on the other side, although at a greater distance, the swelling surges of the Mediterranean beat against the rocks with increasing fury. The wind became so extremely boisterous, together with the pelting of the rain, which soon began to pour in torrents, the surrounding country now rendered any further progress of descending the Apennines totally impracticable. Albert, therefore, with difficulty, re-ascended the mountain, and for several hours wandered along its barren

barren wilds, without finding the least shelter to protect him from the inclemency of the night. At length, however, he perceived a light, but which, from its immense altitude, appeared at first a constellation in the heavens; yet, on drawing nearer to it, he had the satisfaction to observe that the light proceeded from a beacon tower.

The track Montauban fortunately pursued was the only one which led to it with safety, and on turning suddenly a point of the mountain, it brought him close under the structure. To the left of the tower stood a castle, which, although it bore many marks of the ravages of time, yet possessed sufficient remains to indicate its former grandeur. Albert truly rejoiced that he had at last discovered a human habitation in this desolate region, and continued his course thither. On arriving at its massy gates, he knocked several times for admittance. The sound re-echoed along

the

the whole pile of the building, w
seemed to pronounce its being c
deserted. On repeating the knocks
greater loudness, Montauban disti
heard the unbarring of doors, and
mentarily expected to see the
thrown open; in that, however, he
disappointed, for in a few minute
was again silent. Albert now concl
that fear overpowering, preventec
possessors from exerting the righ
hospitality, and that all hopes wer
an end of inducing them, therefor
compassionate the sufferings of the
dering, despairing stranger. Al
therefore, remounted his horse, t
verse again the trackless plains.
dismal cry of a cormorant, which a
moment flew over the walls of th
tle, followed directly by two o
caught his attention. The night wa
so dark to prevent Montauban's ob
ing that they settled on a column
mouldering arch, near the eastern

of the building. The noise of the birds effected what Albert had been unable to accomplish; a man with lights appeared at one of the upper windows of the castle. Once again, therefore, he knocked at the gates; and then a voice, the sound of which apparently coming in that direction, vociferated—"Who's there?"—"An unfortunate stranger," replied Montauban, "claims your humanity."—"What is it you want?—answer me quickly, or I shall be off again," demanded the voice.

"On my journey to Loretto," mentioning any place that came first to his recollection, "I have lost my way, and being benighted, cannot resume the right path without information. I likewise die for hunger and want of rest. Oh, pity, then, my distress," continued Albert, "and grant me a few hours shelter from the storm." No answer was returned to this petition, but shortly after, the iron gates, creaking on their hinges,

hinges, an immense weight, beg
open, and the same man whom h
observed at the window made hi
pearance. Perceiving by the dres
manner of Albert that his crédulit
not imposed on, he accosted him
—" You are welcome, signior, to
in here for an hour or two, but no
er, or I should pay dearly for my
ness towards you." The porter h
then exacted a solemn promise o
new guest to depart by the dawn of
he led his horse into the court-yard,
after closing the gates with much
tion, and securely fastening them,
ducted the young soldier into the
terior of the castle. As they p
through the hall, which was suppo
by several noble columns of ma
Montauban remarked to his atten
that it had the appearance of an arm
ry, fire-arms being hung round the
in every direction. " Ah, signior,"
plied the man, significantly winkin

All

bert, "there is indeed enough of them supply a whole regiment, but they e a sort of playthings I have no fancy r; yet, if they could speak, I warrant e they'd tell strange tales of their for- er masters. Come, come, now," con- nued the facetious porter, "sit you wn, my brave lad, whilst I go bring me sticks to make a fire, for you seem mpletely drenched with the rain, and en I will tell you a good story." Mont- ban, therefore, (although not quite ease in his new habitation,) seated mself by the dying embers of a wood e, at the extremity of the hall; and be- g quite exhausted with fatigue and dis- pointment, fell into a sound sleep.

In the meanwhile, the porter return- ; and having industriously prepared a pper of bread and fruit, trimmed the mp, and mended the fire, he awoke his ngry guest, to partake of the fare pro- ded for him, and to relate the account the castle. Albert, greatly refreshed

by

by the short repose he had
himself with, began, therefore
attentively for the promised inf
The man had scarcely comm
the alarm-bell sounded with tr
violence. "Is it so, my good
replied he; and without utterir
word, he ran across the hall, t
a gun from one of the recesse
most flew up a winding stairca
eastern side of the hall, app
the greatest affright and terr
strange and sudden disappearai
porter, without signifying in
his intention, caused much s
Montauban, who now thought
from his present situation the
visable. That no time should
escape from the castle, whicl
concluded was a receptacle fo
Albert took the lamp from the
discover the bolts, and unlock
which led into the court-yard.
fused noise was now heard in

a

apartments of the building; Montauban, therefore, expecting every moment to be attacked by some of the banditti, and observing a sword suspended over the fireplace, armed himself with that weapon, and then endeavoured to unfasten the door. Before he could accomplish his purpose, however, people with lighted torches were seen to descend the winding staircase. Albert then extinguished the lamp, and resolutely awaited their reproach. "One of them is here," said a voice, which he well knew to be that of the porter.—"Smooth-faced villain!" ejaculated Montauban, "I dare you to the combat; come on, I am prepared for your dastardly set." His opponents, however, advanced but slowly. "Come on, I say," he repeated with fury, "and I will make mince-meat of you!" A blaze of light now illuminated the hall, and in an instant afterwards, one of the men, distinguished above the rest by his dignified appear-

ance and superior dress, rushed past them, saw Albert, and being armed with a loaded pistol, directed it at his breast and fired. The ball, however, fortunately missed Montauban, who then instantaneously rushed at his antagonist, and with the sword he had taken was just going to return the vengeance of his adversary, when the same man who had admitted Albert into the castle arrested his arm, and cried out—"Hold, signior; is it thus you repay my kindness towards you, by attempting the life of my defenceless master, signior Rodolphus?" The sword now fell from the nerveless hand of Montauban, astonishment having fettered every sense, and rendered powerless the hitherto undaunted Albert Rodolphus perceiving his agitation, and that he had surrendered himself at discretion, immediately ordered two of the servants to take their prisoner to the north tower, and there confine him, until they should receive his further orde

fr

for the punishment of the delinquent. Montauban resolving, therefore, to suffer every torture, rather than to disclose himself to the haughty Rodolphus, was then unresistingly led by the servile attendants to his destined prison.

How unaccountable, how mysterious, are the ways of Providence! untoward fate had now consigned Albert into the power of a man, for whom, although unknown to him, he entertained the utmost aversion, whom he so much dreaded to meet, and whom he so much wished to avoid, not merely from private pique, or public report, which was by no means favourable to the character of Rodolphus, but from the simple circumstance of his being the friend of count Anselmo, whose consummate art, as he imagined, had drawn his mother into an alliance from which he foreboded she would suffer years of misfortune. To be thus thrown on the mercy of his supposed enemies, to be dragged, perhaps,

into the presence of Anselmo, wh
had learned from the vintager was
visitant in those domains, to under
scrutiny and reprehension of the h
of his mother, who might probably
cise a parental authority, exacting
him an implicit obedience to whate
chose imperiously to dictate, was d
tion to the mind of the proud offsp
the late general de Montauban. "
of my noble sire!" exclaimed Alb
the departure of his gaolers, wh
doubly locked and barred the en
of the prison chamber, to preve
escape—"Spirit of my noble sire
teach me to emulate thy transc
virtues! ever guide my wanderin
in the paths of honour, and undat
will I brave every impending dan
—Cruel remembrance then b
forcibly to the mind of Montaul
happy days of childhood, passed
a paternal roof, when wearied w
toils of war, the general would, a

ing hour, retire from the noise of a camp, to seek repose and happiness in the bosom of his family. Young as Albert then was, yet well did he remember, and ever cherish, the fond endearments he had received from his father; who would repeat, whilst folding him in his arms—" Happy Montauban, blest with such a son, you have not a wish ungratified!" That sentence now rushed to his recollection, whilst mournfully he exclaimed—" Oh, beloved and ever-to-be-lamented parent, how would your proud heart swell with anger, could you witness the indignity that son now suffers—that son who will rather die than state his motive for seeking shelter in so inhospitable a mansion!" The gallant soldier wept to the memory of time-past. The impulse of paternal affection in some degree subsided, Albert breathed a sigh to Eleanor; then throwing himself on a couch, determined quietly to await the return of morning, which he

thought must elucidate the mysterious proceedings of Rodolphus, and procure a release from this unjust confinement.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

'Tis liberty alone that gives the flower
Of fleeting life its lustre and perfume,
And we are weeds without it. All constraint,
Except what wisdom lays on evil men,
Is evil; hurts the faculties, impedes
Their progress in the road of science; blinds
The eye of discovery, and begets,
In those that suffer it, a sordid mind.

COWPER.

At the dawn of day, Montauban arose from his restless slumbers, to survey more closely the apartment of his prison, in hopes of discovering some means of escaping from the power of Rodolphus. The furniture of the room displayed marks of faded splendour; the gilded

roof, black and gold velvet hangings, canopied couch, and a few moth-eat chairs and sofas, were now, however, i principal ornaments. Looking throug the windows, which were secured l heavy bars of iron, Albert observed, wi surprise, several men on guard along tl ramparts, which were so extensive as t resemble the outworks of a citade Groves of the towering pine and hard fir shaded the castle, but which, for th greater part, appeared to be in ruin Beyond that, the eye was led to a trac less scene of barren plains and rock and bounded by mountains of snow, th at length closed the cheerless prospe In vain did Albert try to discover th path that so unfortunately led him this gloomy structure, from which h had not only been prevented meetin with his servant, but had likewise lost a clue to guide him to the abode of Ele nor, concerning whom, and the young Rodolphus, Albert reflected on with th

most tormenting jealousy, supposing that Ernestine had purposely eluded her from his sight for ever.

In an agony, therefore, of mind, Montauban, for several hours, kept pacing his chamber, in endeavouring to find out some concealed pannel or door to effect his escape; none, however, presented itself. On removing the canopied couch, fancying that an outlet might be there, although extremely heavy, yet, from its mouldering state, it dropt instantly with great weight on the floor, and an old framed picture, that had been suspended behind it, likewise fell with it, and was broken to pieces. Montauban took up the painting, to examine it; and clearing the canvas from the dust, although much torn and mutilated, saw that it represented the scene after a battle. A most prominent feature in the piece was that of a dying warrior, supported by several officers, on whose countenances grief was finely

portrayed. The lighter sketches c
ed of their soldiers burying the
and women wailing over the se
corpses of their husbands or f
whilst some more hardened than
were employing themselves in ca
off the spoil.

This painting so much arrested t
tention of Albert, that he did not he
unbarring of the door of his priso
even look up until it was opened,
the first person that caught his e
entering the chamber, was Ernestin
dolphus, followed by his father a
servant Lupino. The joy of the
fellow at meeting with his master
easily to be expressed; he clasp
hands together, and falling on his
returned thanks to Heaven for Mo
ban's preservation. Surprise, hov
at these unexpected visitants, mi
with the utmost dignity and indiffe
was apparent in the countenance
bert. The son of Rodolphus, as h

pro

proached him, bowed; this from the exasperated young soldier met a slight return in silence, and instantly directed his attention to the picture; whilst the elder Rodolphus, to conceal the displeasure he felt, and mortification he experienced at the *sang froid* of Albert, had already left the tower.

Ernestine then, with seeming concern, addressed Montauban to the following effect:—"That his confinement (his father not having the honour of being personally known to him) had arisen from the confusion and terror of the domestics, supposing the castle was attacked again by the banditti, who, for some time past, had infested the domains in hopes of plunder; that Eris, the porter, who had undertaken to afford him shelter until the storm abated, on hearing the alarm bell, imagined his credulity imposed on, and that he had admitted a robber." At that word Albert started, and would have replied to the

insulting epithet, had not the your
Rodolphus continued with—" Pardo
me, Montauban, but you are too ras
too much alive to your honour, and thir
it wounded, when not an idea of the kir
is intimated or intended. I repeat m
words, therefore, that he took you to l
one of the banditti, and actuated by su
a supposition, instantly informed my f
ther, who thought proper you should l
secured. To be brief, however, with n
relation, as I perceive, Montauban, yo
feelings are agitated from the indigni
you fancy you have received," continu
he, " I now then acquaint you, that th
events of the preceding night origina
ed through the fear of your servan
who supposed you to be hostilely d
tained by us. Chance (as Lupino h
since informed me) directed him to o
vintager's cottage, from which, it appea
you had but just departed. On recountir
over a cheerful glass, the object of h
mission to the neighbourhood of Gro

setto—

setto—" At this account of Rodolphus, Albert's designs, he knew, were, by that unfortunate disclosure, frustrated; Ernestine smiled, therefore, and pausing for a moment, the enraged Montauban exclaimed "Go on, signior!"—"Well then," he replied, "by that intelligence, the vintager was enabled to impart every requisite information, accompanied, no doubt, with other idle village tales, calculated only to inspire terror into the breast of the ignorant. With the assistance, therefore, of a few peasants, to whom, it seems, Lupino had imparted his fears of your personal danger, they sallied forth, and like true knights-errant, determined to rescue you."—"Egregious fools!" reiterated Montauban.—"Draw not a reflection on their exploit," continued Ernestine, laughing, till you hear the conclusion. "On arriving at the eastern side of the castle, which is uninhabited, they inquired of the centinel if any stranger had

had been lately admitted into it? the soldier, not prepared, however, or not disposed to answer this interrogative, they immediately knocked him down; and then another, not far distant, came to the affray, and on perceiving the assailants of his comrade, fired, but on missing, these desperadoes, with their bludgeons, knocked him down also; our valiant guards then," said the young Rodolphus, in an ironical tone, "being thus defeated, a loud shout from the conquerors announced their brilliant victory, who were proceeding to other acts of violence, had not their uproar occasioned a general alarm throughout the domains, and arrested their progress. I," continued Ernestine, "was the first drawn by the sound of their voices into the field of battle, when, judge my surprise, Montauban, I saw Lupino, whom, by the light of a taper, I instantly recognized, standing triumphantly over the fallen soldier,

(the

(the other you'll observe had run away,) and heard him denouncing vengeance, if he did not immediately acquaint him with the fate of his master, who, he was sure, had been inveigled into the castle by his hellish crew."—"I have no patience with such a blockhead."—"You must, then," replied Ernestine, "till you hear the end of his career, for it was then nearly finished. I then ordered that he should be instantly secured by my attendants; and Lupino now finding himself deserted by the rest of his gallant companions, who, on hearing the alarm bell, had thought it advisable to take a hasty retreat from the scene of action, disclosed the whole affair, and falling on his knees, prayed for mercy, and to be permitted to join his master. After some further investigation of so singular a proceeding, I lost no time in acquainting my father of the mistake he was under respecting you, Montauban; and as this unpleasant adventure has

has originated through the fears of your servant concerning your personal safety, I trust you'll pardon him, and at the same time accept an apology from my father, which he particularly desires should be made in his name, with an offer likewise of every accommodation for pursuing your journey." Albert, however, mortified beyond expression at the disclosure of the above account, related with such scrupulous exactness by the son of Rodolphus, in apparent irony, and triumph at the cause of it, so fatal to the future hopes of Montauban, in regard to Eleanor, that he could scarcely recover himself sufficiently to return thanks for so prolix an explanation. The poor culprit, Lupino, with suppliant looks, now entreated to be pardoned: "I would have instantly discharged you, sirrah, for your audacity," exclaimed the offended Albert, "had not this gentleman so powerfully pleaded in your behalf; to him, therefore, are you indebted

debted for my lenity towards you." rnestine Rodolphus now again interered, and said—"Montauban, as you iust be convinced that the conduct of your servant proceeded entirely from a faithful attachment and anxiety for your safety, I pray you, therefore, wound him no more with reproaches, but permit me to desire the poor fellow to make the best of his way towards the kitchen, and there to regale himself after his knight-errantry, whilst I have the pleasure of conducting you into the saloon, likewise with the same intention, to refresh yourself before you recommence your journey."

Albert readily consented to the first proposition, and would have offered no objection to the latter, had he been assured of the absence of the count Anselmo; and the more especially so, because it might possibly have led to some information respecting Eleanor; he declined, however, accepting the invitation,

tion, for the former reason; and L having now returned from his repast, informed his master that thing was ready for his departure. M auban, therefore, hastily embraced opportunity of leaving his prison- ber, to avoid hearing any more apo from the young Rodolphus, whc already been so profuse. Ernestir following him to the gates of the c said, "Whither are you bound Montauban?"—"Savoy."—"I shall follow you then," continued he, ' had not an angel detained me in cany, should have been with my ment long before this, I assure These words struck like a dagger t heart of Montauban; before that tence, Albert began to think favou of his supposed rival; but now softer feeling instantly vanished, to place to the destructive passion c implacable resentment; turning t servant, however, as he mounte

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horse, to conceal the emotions of anger so visibly marked on his countenance, Montauban said, "Are you acquainted with the road we are to take, Lupino?" —"I am, my lord." Albert replied to Ernestine's rhapsodical exclamation, "You have bartered honour to be admitted into paradise then, so fare you well, Rodolphus." Without waiting for an answer, Montauban now rode off, followed by Lupino, who was soon at a distance from the dreaded confines of the castle of Oldenzo.

The day proved fine, and the sun shone with uncommon brilliancy, reflecting innumerable stars on the ice-topped mountains, whose crested summits Albert at length left, after several hours travelling, for the milder climate of the valleys, where the seasons of the year lavish all their beauty and perfection. The shelving sides of the transparent Arno were clothed with woods of olive and almond trees, and the plains

embalmed

embalmed with herbs, and odorific flowers, which encircled themselves through extensive vineyards, and fragrant groves of orange.

Such delightful scenes as these must tend to cheer and renovate the drooping heart; Albert, therefore, felt its genial influence; and for the first time since he had departed from the castle of Rodolphus, began to question Lupino in the track they were then in led to the monastery of Santa Maria?—"Santa Maria, my lord?" he answered with surprise; "I thought you proposed going into Savoy."—"That is my ulterior intention. What intelligence did you acquire there, after my departure?"—"I heard, my lord, that the lady Eleanor," said Lupino, with much hesitation "was not gone to Oldenzo; madam Rodolphus and her daughter visited the convent about that time, and as the young signora had not been seen since my lord, Florisee concluded that she had

gone

with them; however, it was not so, for I learnt by her, when she returned home in the evening, that signora Eleanor was still in the monastery, but strictly confined in her cell, by order of their confessor, one Lodovico, I think she called him, and no person but the abbess permitted to visit her on any account whatever."

This news imparted the deepest sorrow into the breast of the lover. "And where is count Anselmo?" inquired the dejected Albert. "I thought, my lord, you knew by Zilio, the vintager, that the count was with Rodolphus; at least he told me so," said Lupino, continuing, "or I am sure I should never have thought of knocking the centinel down for not letting me into the castle; because I do firmly believe, my lord, that the count bears you a mortal hatred, and would do you an injury, if there was no chance of its being found out." The honest fellow would have been very loquacious, by which Albert might have learnt

learnt some useful information, if he had suffered him to continue; but having instantly silenced Lupino, by saying—"No reflections on the character of count Anselmo, I command you," he therefore followed Montauban without uttering a single word, until they came to a turning of the road—"To the right, my lord," he respectfully said, "leads to Santa Maria."

"The fellow's mad—what have I to do at Santa Maria, sirrah?" Poor Lupino thought if *he* was deprived of his senses, certainly his master was no less so, having so instantaneously altered his intention. Montauban, however, being now well convinced of the inutility of attempting to procure an interview with Eleanor, thought it more advisable to pursue his route towards Savoy, where having at length arrived, he rejoined his regiment, and in active duty found some relief from the tormenting anxiety of hopeless passion.

In

In a short time after Albert's return to the seat of war, Ernestine Rodolphus likewise appeared there; the former mutual coolness between these two young officers had greatly increased, from their late rencounter in Tuscany; and the signal marks of royal favour which Montauban particularly received about that period, tended to foment, rather than diminish, the jealousy of Rodolphus, who on all occasions strove to lessen that fame which Albert, by his bravery, had so justly merited and acquired. He would often comment on, and treat with ridicule, Montauban's affection for the *protegée* of count Anselmo; at the relation of which intelligence Ernestine did not scruple to mention his authors—Lodovico, and his father, signior Rodolphus; and that he well knew the lady had been, for several years, betrothed to a particular friend of her guardian. At other times, he would cast reflections on the personal character of Albert, denominating

nominating him that of a true courtie
humble and cringing to his superior
but insolent and overbearing to tho
who were in an ordinary sphere of li
These unfriendly opinions of Rodolph
in regard to Albert, were related to hi
by a brother officer; and as such infor
ations seldom lose in weight by rep
tition, Montauban instantly waited o
his unjust accuser, and warmly remo
strated on his unfriendly conduct. Wor
grew so high between them, that (as b
fore stated) a duel was the consequenc
and the event of which determined E
nestine to retire again from his milit
career into Tuscany.

It was on Montauban's attendance
the council at Turin that by chance
heard of Anselmo being shortly expec
in that city; and through the kindn
of his royal commander, had obtain
permission to visit his mother, duri
the interim of her husband's absen
On his arrival at Valleroy, he therefo

h

had the good fortune to be apprized of the departure of the count for Piedmont. Every circumstance then seemed to conspire to render his stay there agreeable; and no language can sufficiently convey the delightful sensations that occupied the breast of Albert, when he heard from the lips of his revered parent that the object of his love had been committed to her protection. Past sorrows were forgotten—all his fears, his anxiety, his jealousy, all were at that moment obliterated from his memory; and every thought instantly employed to be enabled to trace the steps of the fugitive. The cottage of Florisee came first to his recollection, as being the most likely place of Eleanor's retreat. Nor was he disappointed, for on pursuing his way thither, the younger Florisee met him, whose surprise and pleasure at seeing Albert could only be augmented by hearing that he had been at Valleroy,

and was then coming, at the desire of his mother, to search for Eleanor.

"Dear, dear, my lord," said the poor girl, "how happy I am then to tell you that the signora is at our cottage! I shall have no occasion to go now to the castle, to inform my lady, the countess, that signora Eleanor is safe, and is coming to Valleroy as soon as she is recovered from her very great fright that she received at the cavern;" and continued —"indeed, my lord, I cannot say how glad I am to meet with you, because I expected nothing less than to see the same ghost that signora Eleanor did this evening; if mother had not commanded me to wait on the countess, the whole world should not have persuaded me to go any more to Valleroy, I assure you that, my lord."—"Well then," replied Albert, smiling, "do you return home, my good girl, with as much speed as possible, and apprize Eleanor

of

coming to be her conductor

A second entreaty was not to excite the young cottager ute his commission. With the ; of a sylph, therefore, Florisee . over the mountains, to com- e to them her glad tidings; and auban was fearful his unexpected night increase the alarm of Ele- e gently followed, to allow time lisclosure.

night was calm and beautiful; a on was ranging, in tranquil ma- ne blue ether; the vesper-bell a Maria vibrated through the with mournful, yet not unpleas- nd; and the gothic walls of the ery, partially illumined by the dent planet, added sublimity to rounding scene of sacred inspir-

drawing nearer the cottage, the ed Albert saw the form of Eleanor lorisee gliding through the trees

that embosomed this humble dwellin
apparently hastening to meet him.
they approached, Montauban dismou
ed from his horse, and eagerly exclai
ed—"So very kind, thus to welcom
me!" Although the tone in which h
spoke was extremely low and inarticu
late, it was not lost to the ear of Ele
nor, who, whilst tremblingly repeatin
his name likewise, with confused joy
she was folded in the arms of her lover
Albert then kissed away the tears whic
bedewed her cheeks, and expressed, i
the most tender terms, the felicity h
experienced at being again restored t
her, after so long and painful an ab
sence. Eleanor could not but feel flat
tered by these testimonies of regard an
solicitude for her welfare; yet a natu
ral timidity, inseparable to true affection
kept her silent, and fearful of acknow
ledging those sentiments of a mutua
passion, which she justly reflected migh
consign her too much into the power o

th

the youth she loved, and prove destructive to her peace of mind hereafter.

Montauban, however, was not well satisfied with this tacit approval of the affection of Eleanor; the natural warmth of his temper, and the sensibility with which he was possessed, conspired to awaken the doubts before entertained respecting the sincerity of her attachment. Albert now fixed his eyes on Eleanor, with that kind of inquiry which extremely abashed her, and was instantly construed by the young soldier as unfavourable to all his hitherto-expected happiness: he therefore released the hand of the lovely girl, which he had taken with so much pleasure, and said, with more respect, though less fervently —"Shall I have the honour, madam, of attending you to Valleroy?"—"Unkind Montauban!" reiterated the now-offended Eleanor, "to ask of me such a question, when you must well know the anguish I have suffered, at being for a mo-

ment separated from my beloved frien
the countess Anselmo." The vexati
that Albert felt from her reception
him, was softened by this declaration
attention to his revered mother. The
had before been unthinkingly continuin
their way to the cottage; now, howeve
he thought proper to dismiss Florise
with a suitable present for her goodnes
and obeyed the mandate of Eleanor t
conduct her to the castle.

As they proceeded thither, Eleanc
began, with that frankness which was s
natural to her, to relate the cause of h
flight from the cavern; but that, Mon
auban said, had been already related t
him by his mother—"No, rather te
me," replied the impetuous youth, "th
event which has released you from a m
nastery?" With hesitation she answere
—"I have been ill, very ill, for man
weeks past, and therefore my guardia
has consigned me to the care of his b
nevolent lady until I am recovered."—

"On

"Only till then?"—"I know not to the contrary," replied the dejected Eleanor, to whom this latter question had renewed the uncertainty of her future fate, and forcibly recalling to her memory the forlorn condition of an orphan, even under the most prosperous circumstances in life, suffused her eyes with tears.

"The cause of your illness, my love," continued Albert, "has then proceeded from your unjust confinement, and for which you are indebted to the confessor Lodovico, whose cruelty——"—"Pardon me," she replied, "if I say that you have been wrong informed; and as in extenuation of the strictness with which our confessor exercises his authority, I must acquaint you, that it arises from his due observance of the forms of our church, and his great piety; the mind of Lodovico is torn with inward anguish, and it has been a subject of

surprise amongst the conventuals, that he can continue to exist under such a pressure of mental agony, seldom allowing himself an interval of rest to sooth his perturbed imagination." To Montauban's question, of hearing the reason of that inquietude? Eleanor answered—"I have more than once requested of sister Cecilia to relate Lodovico's history, but she evinced so much real agitation, and such marked displeasure at my curiosity, that I determined (highly prizing her friendship) never to repeat such a wish in future: the rest of the nuns appear equally desirous of eluding any conversation respecting the confessor; all, therefore, that I could learn from them was, that Lodovico had not always been accustomed to the seclusion of a cloister, had witnessed extensive scenes in life, and——been very unfortunate; they would then conclude by saying—'Seek, therefore, to know no

no more, Eleanor but rest assured that our beloved confessor commands our united pity."

"Lull not yourself into security by their insidious doctrine," eagerly replied Montauban, "their pretended asseverations; Lodovico may be a saint in outward demeanour, yet at heart a hypocrite. Believe me, his time is not always dedicated to prayer; the confessor has not numbered forty years; his animated countenance, fine form, and eyes that at once, by their keen expression, dart conviction on his discourse, has no doubt many proselytes, whilst inwardly he may be a rank voluptuary. It was Lodovico," ejaculated the lover, with rising anger at the idea, "that solicited count Anselmo to have you immured, Eleanor, within the walls of convent; it was Lodovico who acquainted your guardian of my attachment towards you; and it is this man, this pretended devotee of religious forms,

who now seeks, and hopes to accomplish the design of dragging you an immolated victim to the altar—to seclude you for ever in the deep and cheerless gloom of monastic apathy. Rise, therefore superior, Eleanor, to the danger that impending over you," continued Monauban, with the utmost emotion; "be nobly resolute; the attribute most acceptable to God is a life passed in active virtue, not in passive duty towards an omniscient Creator; fly then from a country that offers no equivalent for the loss of your freedom; seek for refuge in kinder region, where liberty is acknowledged to be a birth-right, and every inhabitant enjoys the fruits of it. For your sake, my Eleanor, I will be myself an alien; will, on the olive-branch of peace revisiting my native land, follow you to the farthermost parts of the globe; consent to be mine by the holies of our church, let me be your protector, and then who will be so happ

so supremely blest, as Albert de Montauban!"

"Ah! where," replied the weeping girl, "would you have me seek for refuge, young as I am, ignorant of foreign customs, and without a friend (if I displease the count Anselmo) to succour or advise me in so forlorn a situation?"

"England, my love!" he exclaimed, with fervour, "is the country that will offer you an asylum; in that protected isle, the stranger and unfortunate, of whatever nation or state they may happen to belong, receives succour, aid, and support. To Britain, then, would I consign you, and into the arms of a revered relation now resident there, a sister of my mother, who many years since was united to an English gentleman of the name of Stanmore, a particular friend of her brother, St. Orville.—It was a happy union," sighed Albert, as he reflected how different would be

his fate, if unsuccessful in his pres
suit; "for Olivia loved Stanmore w
the tenderest affection; he too meri
the treasure he had acquired, for to
most brilliant intellectual qualities
joined an universal philanthropy;
widow, the stranger, and the orphan,
blest by his munificence, and hail him
their guardian angel."

"Tempt me not, Montauban," int
rupted Eleanor with firmness; "ten
me not to a dereliction of my duty,
such sweet dreams of promised felici
let reason, not passion, direct our p
suits; and then, however tempestu
the troubled sea of life may pro
peace shall waft us to a happy shore
last. Reflect but for a moment,"
continued, "the obligations I owe
count Anselmo; it is true he was for
to take me under his protection;
that could have only actuated him
the period that his personal safety
out of danger: when that was secur

onger was there any compulsion to
ce the count to adhere to the impe-
s demand of my father, (if the man
delivered me into his hands, desert-
me at such a tender age, can be
d as such); no, there was none:
his natural compassion and genero-
therefore, (which is ever inherent in
noble mind,) from these alone am I
bted solely for my present existence;
would you have me return such
dness with base ingratitude?"

he lover, although not well con-
ed by these arguments of the im-
ticability of his proposition, yet
ght it most advisable to defer ur-
it till some more favourable op-
tunity should present itself. The
ient turrets of Valleroy, frowning
majestic grandeur, now appeared
view, and thither Montauban and
nor continued their way in mutual
nce, except being now and then
ken by the deep-drawn sighs of Al-

bert,

bert, that could not avoid being infectious to his companion, and causing her real sorrow, which the following events of that night was by no means calculated to allay.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

Glory is like a circle in the water,
Which never ceaseth to enlarge itself,
Till by broad spreading it disperse to nought.

SHAKESPEARE.

RESUMING the narrative of count Anselmo, whom we have before mentioned as having arrived at the castle of Oldenzo, and from the private conference of that evening between the friends, and the unpleasant communication he had received from Rodolphus, had so deeply agitated his mind, as to cause even a momentary derangement of intellect. In that melancholy state, the count had risen from his bed, to prepare for his instantaneous

instantaneous departure to Turin; to expedite that intention, he resolved to pursue the rest of his journey on horseback, without waiting for his attendants; for whom he left orders that they might proceed at their leisure.

As Anselmo pursued his route through Piedmont, and on entering the precincts of its capital, many a recollection, painful to his mind, arose of past occurrences. How unlike is the present with the past! truly uncertain are all the events of life; and how unforeseen do these crowd on us! Mortifying to his pride must it then have been to reflect upon his former grandeur, and the present humiliating change—he who had never before returned to this place without receiving, if possible, additional homage—he whom the people always flocked in crowds to see, and to extol the man whom they emphatically styled the saviour of their country, and whom they almost worshipped as a god—him whose

whose name even their children were taught, in their first accents, to lisp its praise, and then, preceded by these young embryos of a flourishing state, these future defenders of its glory, have strewn with flowers the streets through which he passed, and crowned, as a memento of a nation's love and gratitude, the brows of their hero with unfading laurel. Mark the reverse! behold him now forsaken, neglected, and despised! How unstable, how transitory, is popular favour! which has oftener proved rather a misery than a blessing to him that has possessed it; seldom founded on judgment or sound reason, and therefore can never be lasting; a delirium of the brain for the moment, fatal to those whose minds are dazzled by such false illusions, or deceitful phantoms; a loud clamour is raised, under the stale pretence of redressing some grievance, of which the poor in every state complain, who invariably suppose themselves oppressed by the rich;

rich: this mania soon becomes of a extent truly alarming; the prime move of these proceedings is adored by the infatuated multitude with the most wild enthusiasm; thousands repair to the standard of their favourite; they wade through blood to exalt him; they sacrifice the lives and property of the peaceable and well-disposed at the shrine of that mistaken idol called liberty, but which, in fact, is only another expression for anarchy and confusion, and ending generally in complete subjugation and unlimited slavery. In forwarding this supposed good, they are in their opinions overbearing, insolent, and despotic: when power is engrafted on ignorance, all modest and private virtues are hurled from the scene of action—all sense, all religion, is discarded from their tribunal But lo! fallacious hope! no sooner doe this favoured champion of their right and liberties possess himself of all thi proffered confidence, than flattered b

succes

success, he grasps at universal sway, and subjects the credulous multitude to abject slavery: for a time even should a return of reason glance on the minds of his deluded followers that they have been woefully disappointed in their expectations, they are ashamed, they dare not at once acknowledge the error into which they have fallen; the fuel of revenge, however, lays rankling in their breasts, which a single breath blows into a flame, and then is their former idol sacrificed to the manes of those whose blood they had so lamentably, so unjustly shed, for his unwarrantable and individual ambition.

Some slight shaded difference excepted, such was the situation of the count Anselmo at this period. The mysterious and the sudden death of the general de Montauban in the prison of Oristagni, and the count's marriage with Almeria, before the second year of her widowhood had expired, was an event that afforded

afforded ample scope for his enemies work upon, and in which they we now beyond their hopes successf Having learned that the duke of Savo regretted the loss of Anselmo's counse and had it in contemplation to reques his return to the official department thei occupied by signior Rodolphus, they in dustriously circulated the most malevo lent reports, to attach to their interes the remaining friends of the count, an even to join in the popular outcry, b having gone so far as to have pronoun ced him deeply concerned, and an abe tor in the untimely end of the genera whom they firmly believed had been ba barously murdered.

A meeting of the nobles was accor ingly held at the senate-house, to ta this subject under their consideratic and to digest the most efficient means proving the truth or fallaciousness such a rumour. It was unanimous agreed by that assembly that they shou

prese

present a petition to their sovereign for that purpose; and further prayed that the body of the lamented Leontine de Montauban should be removed from Sardinia to Turin; and to mark the grateful sense of the people, for the services the general had so conspicuously rendered his country, to bestow on it a public funeral.

The prayer of the petition was granted by the duke of Savoy, and emissaries immediately sent off to Cagliari on the melancholy occasion: instructions had been likewise given to signior Rodolphus, to apprize his predecessor of the past occurrences, requiring (if the count intended to refute the charges brought against him) an immediate attendance in Savoy.

Rodolphus, then on the eve of returning into Tuscany, thought it most advisable, therefore, to communicate these instructions at a personal interview; the relation of which it was that caused

caused the count such severe anguish, and actuated his sudden disappearance from the castle of Oldenzo.

On Anselmo's arrival at Turin, and on entering the gate of Port de Suzé, the town presented a scene of the utmost splendour. It was the day of Corpus Domini; a grand procession of the inhabitants, sumptuously attired, was then proceeding to the church, to celebrate the occasion, and to offer up their thanksgivings for the miracle.*

To

* The church of Corpus Domini is one of the best in Turin, the inside being entirely composed of the most beautiful marble, and adorned with precious relics, arising from the numerous donations which are continually presented to it. For the building of this sanctuary (tradition says) it was indebted to the following phenomenon:—In the year 1453, during a trifling war between the inhabitants of Suzé and the Dauphiness, a Piedmontese soldier stole out of a church, in the village of Isliglié, the host, in a silver stand, which he loaded, with other merchandize, on his mule: when he came to Turin, the

To avoid observation, therefore, the count did not repair to his mansion (of which he still had possession) till midnight, but went to a house in the suburbs, belonging to one Lusignan, who had formerly acted as his secretary. Anselmo was received by him with much pleasure, and every accommodation offered to alleviate the fatigues of his journey. Lusignan was a man of strict integrity, of unshaken faith, and likewise possessed of great courage. During the late process against his patron, singly had he contended to plead in Anselmo's favour, to state the inconsistency of many

the animal rested at this spot, and its burden fell off; the stand then opened of itself, and the host came out, and rose instantly in the air, where it remained till the bishop, Louis Romagnano, followed by many of the clergy, arrived, and through their prayers, brought the host to enter into the chalice, or cup, which he held. To preserve the memory of which, they built a small chapel; and in the year 1607 it was altered by the devout inhabitants of Turin into a magnificent church.

many of their arguments; and concluded a very nervous harangue, by saying, that he would pledge his own life for the innocence of the count Anselmo. On the senators remonstrating at the unseasonable warmth with which Lusignan had spoken, he replied—"I pray you, my noble lords, to pardon the manner of my speech, having been attentive only to weigh the substance of it, to which I request your gracious consideration. I repeat," he continued, "and humbly submit to your lordships' calm reflection, the improbability of such a crime as that imputed to my noble patron. The count, although unknown to our beloved general de Montauban, was his most strenuous supporter. Is it possible, then, that my noble lords can draw an unfavourable inference from that circumstance, which at the time was so much applauded, and added another laurel to the many he has so justly fought for, and received from his grateful

ful countrymen? If so, in vain may we look for friendship! It is certainly not in the breast of wise men, for they will fear the misconstruction that might arise from doing a generous action; not in the breast of fools, for they only have a friendship for themselves; nor is it to be expected from the herd of priests that daily crowd to our altars, for their prevailing sentiment is their own salvation. If friendship, therefore, should be discarded from those with whom it has hitherto been nurtured—the sensible, well-informed patriots, its name must become a dead letter, and consigned for ever to oblivion. Reflect, my noble lords," continued Lusignan, with enthusiastic ardour, arising from the importance of the subject, "that it is by the exercise of brotherly love we are taught to regard the whole human species as one family; the high and low, rich and poor, created by one Almighty Being, and sent into the world for the aid, and

support, and protection of each other. On this principle, man unites man of every country, sect, and opinion; and conciliates true friendship among those who might otherwise have remained at perpetual distance. Relief, my lords, is the next tenet of our profession: to relieve the distressed is a duty incumbent on all men, but particularly on men who are all linked together by an indissoluble chain of sincere affection. To sooth the unhappy, to sympathize with their misfortunes, to compassionate their miseries, and to restore peace to their troubled minds, is the grand aim we ought to have in view. On this basis we establish our friendship, and form our connexions."

So strong, however, was the prepossession of Anselmo's guilt in the minds of the people, that all argument inclining to favour the supposed culprit was rendered unavailing and nugatory. The populace had even gone so far as to pronounce

nounce Lusignan an accomplice in the foul deed; and on his retiring from the senate-house, he was treated by them with marked indignation and insult; notwithstanding which, being conscious of his innocence, he nobly withstood the torrent of clamour that was raised against himself, and likewise continued to exalt the character of his patron, and express abhorrence at their unjustifiable proceedings. Lusignan, therefore, acted up to the principle of equity he had so forcibly recommended to others; and proved the only remaining friend of the count at this juncture. Faithfully did he now then relate to Anselmo every circumstance of this strange and unaccountable process; and at the same time, respectfully offering his services to the count in any way that might be thought most useful. "Yet, my lord," continued the good old man, "do not too hastily trust professions of friendship, nor reveal your thoughts too readily;

for I fully agree in opinion with the wise son of Sirach, that 'false friends are always the most dangerous foes.' Pardon the boldness of my offering you advice," said Lusignan, "the presumptive manner, too, in which I tender it; having seen and thoroughly scanned the motives, the pursuits of mankind, in general, and by tracing the evil source from whence it springs, I have been enabled to steer clear of the vortex into which the greater part of the human race unthinkingly plunge themselves. The prevailing passion I allude to is pride, the false notion of attaining happiness by grandeur; their vanity, therefore, is insurmountable, and they spare no pains to arrive at this desired good, from an idea too often implanted in the youthful breast, that the rich and powerful are always gliding on a calm surface, and without they attain it likewise, their lives will be as a troubled sea, invaded by storms and tempests.

have found, by long experience, it is to that passion alone, therefore, from whence arises real misery in this world, and is the cause even of an imperfect belief of a future one; the gay and thoughtless can never be made sensible of their error until they feel the weight of it; they say, only point out to us one advantage obtained by an humble station, and we will follow it. To have truth announced to you, at all times, is ever salutary and beneficial in its effects, whereas, in prosperity, every thing appears under false colours of flattery and insidious friendship, where the baneful venom of envy is nurtured, and in the end, too often overthrows, by its hidden poison, the favourite of the fickle goddess."

This garrulity of the old man, in expressing his sentiments and opinions, was not displeasing to the count Anselmo, who, in acquiescing with the latter remarks, exclaimed—"Oh Almeria, to

thy fatal charms then am I indebted for all my misfortunes!"—"Think not so, my lord," replied Lusignan; "I trust many happy days will yet await on you; should fate, however, unfortunately doom it that your enemies shall sleep in security, and yourself fall a victim to their machinations, never, my lord, oh! never," continued the worthy secretary, "let your countess be acquainted with the unhappy cause of your downfall, for the agony of her mind, on reflecting on the circumstance which led to it, will drive her to madness!"

"How can I prevent the misery you so emphatically foretell, Lusignan?"—"Know you not, my lord," he replied to this question of the count, "that in the province of Umbria, near the town of Foligno, stands an uninhabited villa formerly belonging to the ancient family of Thersilochus, and which was left to a nephew, who was shipwrecked

some

some years ago, in his voyage to Algiers, where he was going to release, by ransom, a female captive, that had been taken by the Moors, a lady to whom it was supposed the young man was fondly attached? It has now devolved to a distant relative, who, not approving of the situation, has suffered the noble mansion to go into decay; and therefore an old peasant and his wife, whose cottage is contiguous, have been entrusted with the keys of the dwelling, with the power of disposing of the structure, should a purchaser be found for it.

"This, my lord," then continued Lusignan, "I would advise you to fix on for the retreat of the countess Anselmo, until the period it may please Heaven to allow you to return with her in safety to Valleroy; nor should there be any time lost in carrying this scheme into execution; for to my certain knowledge,

ledge, the friends of the deceased general de Montauban have applied to the senate to separate Almeria from you by force, for the professed purpose of placing the countess in a convent for the rest of her life."

"Distraction!" exclaimed the now ungovernable Anselmo, on rising from his seat, and whilst pacing the room, with hurried and unequal steps, "may every torment light upon the wretches for so diabolical an invention! Tear from me my wife! the saint-like Almeria from the protecting arms of a husband! my brain's on fire! I can no longer bear to hear the accumulating insults which are preparing for me! Before to-morrow's dawn will I repair to the palace," continued Anselmo, with increasing fury, "then will I throw myself at the feet of my sovereign, state my wrongs, the cruelty of my enemies, unfold the designs of these men

of

of blood, and turn the sacred sword of justice to their own destruction!" A pause ensued after these wild exclamations of the count; Lusignan, however, remained silent. Anselmo then went on —"Is my honourable house, and the name of my noble ancestors, to be traduced by such miscreants? deluded vipers! love, they suppose, has made me a coward; a grovelling, mean-spirited coxcomb; afraid to meet the eye of a man; metamorphosed, perhaps, into a drivelling waiting-maid. They shall be, however, better acquainted with me," ejaculated Anselmo, with a convulsive laugh, "know me better; the flame of glory, although for some time dormant in my soul, is not extinguished; my single arm shall hurl them headlong from the height which they have so ignobly raised themselves, by consummate art and treachery unparalleled!"

In vain did Lusignan endeavour to calm

calm those passionate tumultuous declarations of count Anselmo: all argument, however, was ineffectual, in the present unhappy state of his mind: this worthy man, therefore, who had only acted the part of a true friend, in tendering advice and giving information to Anselmo, that he might be enabled to counteract the designs of his enemies, foreseeing, now, that the least opposition would tend only to exasperate the already-agitated feelings of his patron, in the most respectful manner pleaded excuse for the unseasonable warmth in which he had spoken, and then left the apartment.

Some time after this elapsed before the count could sufficiently recover himself to receive Lusignan again into his presence. The hour for his departure drew near; the pious votaries of Corpus Christi had all returned to their habitations, and excepting a few love-stricken youths, who were employed in serenading near the dwellings

llings of their mistresses, the city perfectly tranquil, and free from interruption.

On a female servant appearing with re lights, and other refreshments, Anmo ordered Lusignan to re-enter the amber, and on his obeying it, said—Well, my good friend, I have not en unmindful of your sage advice; id to convince you of the truth of what ay, to-morrow I purpose sending inructions to my confidential steward to urchase the villa with all possible speed, id to prepare it for the reception of ie countess Anselmo."

"I hope, my good lord," he replied, that you will, in this instance, not be tuated by any suggestions, without lmly reflecting yourself on the proiety of such an expedient, which you ill be more competent to judge of after interview with our royal duke."—"I ink with you," said the count, "and

as the night is far advanced, will no longer trouble you; in the morning, however, I have to request your attendance on me to the palace;" which being assented to. Anselmo then took leave of Lusignan, and immediately departed.

END OF VOL. I.

Printed by J. Darling, Leadenhall-Street, London.

Anselmo;

OR,

THE DAY OF TRIAL.

A ROMANCE.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

BY

MARY HILL,

AUTHOR OF THE FOREST OF COMALVA, &c.

To live with fame,
The gods allow to many; but to die
With equal lustre, is a blessing Heaven
Selects from all the choicest boons of fate,
And with a sparing hand on few bestows.

GLOVER.

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ANSELMO.

CHAP. I.

Such is the weakness of all mortal hope,
So fickle is the state of earthly things,
That ere they come into their aimed scope,
They fall so short of our frail reckonings,
And bring us bale and bitter sorrowings,
Instead of comfort which we should embrace.

SPENCER.

ALONE, not attended even by a single domestic, did the count then proceed, and safely arrive at his own mansion adjoining the citadel. The structure of it was magnificent, and well accorded to the splendour of its interior decorations. In the grand hall, which was supported by

noble pillars of the Corinthian or
senators had usually met to disc
Anselmo on affairs of state. Th
used to be seen ambassadors c
ous nations, delivering their cre
for the count's approbation, bef
thought it advisable to lay them
feet of their sovereign; and in
structure, this princely residence
in former times was graced by
courtly dame, where

" The feast, the carol, and the dance,
Minstrels and music, poetry and play,
With balls by night, and tournaments by
The goddess, Pleasure, held her sov'reign

There was Anselmo now obliged
in disguise, and even to annou
name before he could obtain adr
from his own servants.

In mute astonishment they co
their master to his chamber, who
missing them, gave orders to be a
early as five the next mornin

count then employed the intervening hours in penning an affectionate letter to his Almeria, urging the necessity of her retiring into Umbria. To enforce a ready compliance with which, a deranged state of his finances was particularly dwelt on as the ostensible motive.

From the general tenor of her life, and love of solitude, Anselmo had no doubt of the countess's compliance with this command. The epistle was then concluded by saying, that as her retirement would only be temporary, it was his wish that Eleanor should be sent immediately to the convent of Santa Maria, and there remain until his return to Valleroy.

To remove every fear respecting Albert de Montauban, whom he well knew cherished an extreme fondness for his *protegée*, and although supposed by the count to be actively engaged in the service of his country, yet he determined to send a written order likewise to the confessor Lodovico, to apprize him of

his resolution respecting her, and to
bid Eleanor's intercourse with any st
gers; and further, that she was to be
nied the permission of conversing e
at the convent grate. Anselmo 1
wrote the following lines with a tr
bling hand, and extreme agitation :—

"This severe prohibition to
sure the safety of Eleanor, and my alt
intention to effect that first wish of
heart, in which you must be well c
vinced, Lodovico, I can only be actu
from the sincerest motives and tende
affection for my lovely girl, whose
ture happiness it certainly behoves
to promote and ensure as much as i
my power; and had I before confor
to your advice, I think my mind w
have been at ease, and the pangs I
suffer respecting her avoided. No m
however, of unavailing regret; the
secret which torments my soul 1

n

never be divulged. In you, Lodovico, have I trusted—let me not be deceived —continue to be my friend, but seek to know no more of my eventful life, than that in one cause Lodovico and Anselmo are alike interested and immutable. The inauspicious star that presided at my birth now lowers over my head, and foretells great changes. A few hours will decide my defeat or victory. If the former, imprisonment for life will be my portion—the latter, reversed on my enemies with never-ceasing vengeance.

"You say Montauban loves Eleanor—so do I. Be careful of your charge, Lodovico; should they ever again meet, tear them asunder—confine the presumptuous girl to her cell—feed her with bread and water—fasting, prayer, and rigid authority, will stifle the unruly passion, and bring her to a sense of reason. Should that, however, fail, you know my fixed determination, which, although it is severe, I am resolved on.

" By my orders, Almeria departs fr
Valleroy at the same period that Elea
returns to your convent; I commit
care of the countess to my faithful stew
Rubinelli. Her son, the impetuous
bert, shall repent his boldness and di
bedience. Never again shall he dare
enter into my presence, or his mothe
Almeria being my wife, is therefore s
ject to my will and pleasure. An ene
of mine must be considered as hers a
If one common interest does not b
the irrefragable sentence pronounced
each so solemnly at the altar, it is a p
fanation, by the decree of Heaven,
merits condign punishment. With
same fervency that I now love Alm
do I dislike her son. Albert de M
auban and Theodore Anselmo are i
concilable foes. To me, Lodovico, is
proud stripling indebted for his p
perous advance into royal favo
through my recommendation he
likewise obtained distinguished mark
hon

onour in that army which I have so of-
n led to the field of battle, and confer-
d with glory; and for all this, these
ited endeavours of my zeal to serve
e offspring of Almeria, am I requited
ly with the sting of ingratitude; and
r my folly, laughed at, scorned, and
sulted. It is through Albert de Mont-
ban that I am now forced from my
omains, to appear as a criminal at the
ourt of Savoy. He is at the head of
e foul conspiracy that seeks my de-
truction. One more capable of exe-
uting the black design is not to be
ound in the empire; yet let him beware
f the revenge of an Italian. If the son
f my wife becomes the public accuser
f Anselmo, the whole united world to
ave the miscreant shall not screen him
rom my fury.

"I will not, however, longer dwell on
he subject; for it is a weakness to com-
plain of misfortunes where self-courage
s only wanting to redress them.

" I expect Rodolphus in Piedmont the ensuing month; it was his intention to visit you at Santa Maria on his journey thither; I have just recollected the reason for it—to make a request (by desire of his lady) for the company of Eleanor, during her daughter's absence, for a few weeks, on a party of pleasure to Arrezzo. I believe they had my permission when at Oldenzo; I leave it to your judgment whether it will be proper to accord with that promise. Reverend father, I remain, with the most perfect esteem and attachment for your person, your knowledge, and excellent qualities, irrevocably yours,

ANSELMO."

The count having carefully closed and sealed these letters for Tuscany, then awaited with extreme impatience the arrival of Lusignan.

About seven o'clock his steward entered

tered the chamber, and bowing profoundly, said, with great hesitation—

"My lord, I come to impart—"

Anselmo being only attentive to the former words, interrupted him by saying—"I am glad of it."

"My lord," replied the trembling domestic, in astonishment, "are you serious in what you have said?"

"Certainly I am; and no time must be lost in needless preparation; for on my return from the palace, you must instantly set off to Valleroy, and from thence to Santa Maria, with this packet for the confessor Lodovico. There will be further communications for you after I have consulted with my secretary, who I expect every moment."

Rubinelli could no longer remain silent—

"The signior is now in your house, my lord."

"Admit him then," hastily replied the count.

"I dare not—the officers of justice are in the hall, and will not suffer him to advance any further. They say, my lord, you are their prisoner."

The poor fellow, who read in the countenance of his master an expression of extreme despair at this intelligence, could not utter another syllable, even in answer to his question of—"Under whose authority they acted?" Anselmo, however, supposing the order must have received the royal signature, he determined to send his steward immediately into Tuscany, reflecting the least delay of executing that design might be dangerous.

In very few words, Rubinelli obtained his instructions to purchase the villa near Foligno for the residence of Almeria—to inform the reverend father Lodovico of this proceeding of the court of Savoy, in respect to his master—and to act only in concert with the confessor, whose commands Rubinelli was implicitly to

o rely on and attend to; and then dis-
nissing him, the count said—"Now I am
repared;" when instantly he descended
nto the hall, to meet his unexpected vi-
itants.

CHAP. II.

I will instruct my sorrows to be proud;
For grief is proud, and makes his owner stoop.

SHAKESPEARE.

THE native pride, then, of Anselmo, however hurt, was not humbled by this new occurrence; and therefore, with peculiar dignity and natural firmness, he demanded of the officer to acquaint him with the motive of so singular and unjust a proceeding?

"The only information in my power to give you, my lord," he replied, "is my having received a peremptory order from the senate, that immediately on your arrival at Turin, we were to detain you in our custody, and no person to be admitted into your presence without his

g first procured a grant from a sena-
:."

"I have heard enough, sir; and as
ch is your mandate, I suppose I must
bmit. But where is my secretary?—
at have you done with him?—is he
ewise your prisoner?"

"No, my lord," replied the officer, to
is question of the count's; "signior Lu-
nan, on hearing that you were put
der an arrest, departed with much pre-
itation."

"That is as it should be," answered
selmo. "I am obliged to him for
s early disclosing his true character.
u will now perceive, captain, the
th of the following reflection—that
versity is the only test by which you
y know a friend or an enemy: so
ewell to my worthy secretary, signior
signan: and," continued he, in an
nical tone, "well, gentlemen, what
a Loffer for your amusement? Come,
come,

which being readily agreed to, Z
the head officer, and his companio
took freely of the fare provided for
and for some hours, by their fa
discourse, they relieved the coun
the agony with which he was so
oppressed.

Rubinelli, who had been industr
employing himself in regulating t
fairs of the household, before he
on his secret expedition, now e
the apartment to hand more refresh
to these unwelcome guests; and o
senting some sherbet to his master
sign informed Anselmo every thin
prepared for his journey; which wa
differently returned by the count.

which led from the garden into the road, he mounted his horse, and set off for Tuscany.

In the evening, Luzzara, whose spirits were greatly exhilarated by the generous treatment he had met with from Anselmo; and being naturally of a more communicative turn of mind than his companion, he related to his noble prisoner the history of his life. Several of the adventures were not devoid of interest; the count therefore listened with much complaisance and attention to the following relation:—

"I am, my lord," said Luzzara, "a Sardinian by birth, belonging to the town of Cagliari. My mother was the only daughter of a merchant of that place, named Sorreno. This old man's happiness chiefly consisted in amassing riches for an intended son-in-law of his, a Polish nobleman, called Lovinski, who was very proud and very poor. His circumstances, however, were looked over by

by the merchant, in the consideration, that by uniting his daughter Isabel to his friend, it would aggrandize the name of Sorreno for ever.

"Love, my lord," continued Luzzara, with a deep sigh, "often makes sad havock in the human breast. My father, at that period, was employed by signior Sorreno as an amanuensis; he likewise adored the youthful and beauteous Isabel; nor was his passion unreturned: she gave him so many unequivocal testimonies of her regard (which was heightened by the rash determination of Sorreno for his daughter's immediate union with the duke Lovinski), that Isabel consented to my father's proposal of eloping from parental tyranny. They embarked for Italy—a priest joined their hands—and the marriage of Luzzara and Isabel was publicly announced at Cagliari, to the great discomfiture of signior Sorreno and his friend, who had arrived in Sardinia only the day preceding the flight of the lovers.

"By

"By this fatal act, however, my mother was left portionless; for at the demise of her father, which took place soon after, the immense fortune of the merchant devolved, by his express command, to a sister that came to reside with him immediately on departure of his daughter, whose disobedience Sorreno never would pardon.

"Every hope was then at an end of Isabel being enabled to return with her husband into Sardinia; and as a situation offered for his acceptance in Paris, my father," continued the young man, "eagerly embraced it, and for many years supported my mother, whom he tenderly loved, although not in affluence, with a sufficiency to render her contented. From too excessive an application to study, however, his health declined; and the increasing expences of a young family so greatly depressed his spirits, that at length my father was obliged to give up the place he occupied.

"At

"At this distressing juncture, a friend of his particularly interested himself in our behalf, and procured Marsias, my eldest brother, then about nineteen, a situation in Sardinia."

"Marsias!" replied the count, with surprise; and continued—"Is he your brother?"

"Yes, my lord," answered Luzzara; "but more of him hereafter. I had a sister, lovely in person as in mind—she was consigned, at the age of twelve, to be companion to a lady who resided at Venice; from whose relations, however, we received, ere fifteen months had expired of her absence from us, the afflicting intelligence of Isabel having been taken, as well as her mistress, by a banditti, whilst on a journey to Verona; and although great rewards had been offered for any person who would explore the recesses of the mountains, in search of the unfortunates, strange to tell, although several years have expired since that

that miserable event, my lord," continued Luzzara, "they have never since been heard of."

"Your family has indeed suffered severe misfortunes, and commands the sincerest pity," said the count, much interested by the narration of Luzzara; who then continued—

"Ah, my lord! they were light in comparison to those that followed them. My poor mother fell a victim to the grief with which she was overwhelmed by the loss of my sister. On finding that her dissolution drew near, she requested me to approach the bedside, and read to her some prayers. To calm the agonies of an expiring saint, I performed the melancholy and afflicting mandate: and when the pious task was finished, which had been rendered almost inaudible by my frequent sobs, and the unutterable anguish that oppressed me on that miserable day I gently rose her fainting frame, and by her desire, supported her head with pillows

lows, that she might breathe more freely, and delivered to me her last injunction. Excuse these tears, my lord," said Luzzara to the count; "they ill become a soldier; yet whenever sad remembrance brings to my mind her hapless fate, they will flow in spite of all my endeavours to conquer so womanish a weakness; I shall never forget it. With clasped hands and uplifted eyes my mother implored Heaven to be merciful, and to forgive the errors of her youthful days. She then embraced me; and with faltering accents and beseeching looks, said—'I pray you console and comfort the declining days of your venerable father. I grieve only for my husband—my affectionate Luzzara,' she continued; 'for at his aged years, my tender care is most required to soften the pangs, and heal the wounds inflicted on him for the loss of my darling Isabel; therefore I conjure you, if you ever hope to enjoy the happiness of a mind at ease, and wish to

gladden

gladden the heart of your parent, never rest in quiet till you have found my Isabel—bear to her, as the last legacy of a dying mother, this kiss—say to her, my Cornelius, that I invoked every angel to protect my child; and——' More she wished to have said to me, my lord," continued Luzzara to the count, who had been listening with great attention to this affecting history, " but speech forsook her—a cold and deadly dew came over her face; another look my mother blessed me with—she then leant her head on my bosom, gave a short sigh, and the vital spark of life was fled for ever!"

Some minutes now elapsed before the young Luzzara could continue his narration. After, however, brushing away a few manly tears that rose to his eyes, whilst sorrowing for his departed parent, he went on—

" Ah, gracious Heaven! who can paint the scene that followed—the distracted feelings of my father, when at night, on his

his returning home, he found my m
a lifeless corpse! the physician h
only in the morning afforded him
of her recovery. I must," cont
Luzzara, " pass over it in silence
ficient will it be for me to say, t
many accumulated woes fixed on his
shattered brain a lasting derangen
For several days my father refus
kinds of nourishment, and it wa
prising to every one that he conti
to exist from so long an abstinen
food. Neither could I prevail on
to quit the room in which lay m
ceased mother. For hours would h
himself close to the bed, and con
with her as if she was still living.
the third day, the priest entered the
ment; in awful silence they prepare
last sad offices of strewing flowers o
body, placed it on the bier, and the
parted with their sacred load.

" I do not think," said Luzzara t
count, " that my poor father was

cons

conscious of that afflicting ceremony, as his looks evinced the most perfect composure. On the representation of his friend (who had been unremittingly kind and attentive to our family), that he should, as soon as possible, be removed from France, and (as the only chance for his recovery) again breathe his native air, I lost no time in carrying that advice into execution. In a month after the lamented death of my mother, we commenced our journey to Marseilles, for the purpose of embarking for Sardinia; but on arriving at Avignon, I was obliged, for some time, to discontinue the journey, from the alarming increase of my father's malady. It was in vain that I endeavoured to procure apartments in the town—no person would admit us; and had it not been for the generosity of an English gentleman, my situation at that period would have been most distressing; he grieved for our misfortunes; and, as he was pleased to express

press himself, admired the filial piety which I sought to relieve an afflicted rent."

Luzzara then continued to relate most pathetic terms, the benevolenc the stranger, who had supplied t wants, and relieved them from ev difficulty, exclaiming — "Thrice fo nate was my introduction to that wor man! who, on my informing him difficulty I had in procuring a lodgi instantly offered one for our accepta in his own residence, situated about h a mile from Avignon. I availed my of the liberal invitation with the utm gratitude; and in conducting my s parent to the stranger's mansion, it but justice to say, that we received fr him all the hospitality for which t English nation is so truly and distingui edly celebrated."

The evening now being far advanc and the count's servants having ente the apartment to announce supper, A

selt

selmo desired the officers would follow him into the saloon, to partake of the refreshments; and after it was finished, at the particular request of the count, Luzzara recommenced, and came to a conclusion of his history.

CHAP. II.

Scarce the third glass of measured hours was run,
When like a fiery meteor sunk the sun—
The promise of a storm. The shifting gales
Forsake by fits, and fill the flagging sails.
Hoarse murmurs of the main from far were heard,
And night came on; not by degrees prepar'd,
But all at once. At once the winds arise,
The thunders roll, the forked lightning flies.

— — — — —

The wand'ring vessel drove before the wind:
Toss'd and retoss'd, aloft, and then below,
Nor port they seek, nor certain course they know,
But every moment wait the coming blow.

DRYDEN.

"THE family of Mr. Delaval consisted of a wife and two daughters; the eldest of the young ladies (named Horatia) had been

been for some years in a declining state of health, and was therefore advised by her physicians to come to the south of France; which was the reason of Mr. Delaval's residing in the vicinity of Avignon. Horatia is a beautiful girl—if you please, my lord, we will drink to her better health." The count smiled at this request, and impatience of Luzzara to have it assented to; who having drank the toast with enthusiasm, thus continued—"Whenever I think of that lady, my lord, all local evils are forgotten; and therefore, notwithstanding an insurmountable barrier presents itself (from the difference of our religion) to my being united to that lovely woman, I will never marry another, that I am determined on.

"For three weeks I experienced, as well as my aged parent, the politest attention from Mr. Delaval; and if it was possible I could erase from my remembrance the tender care and solicitude of Horatia, to alleviate the sufferings of

my poor father, I should deserve evermore misfortunes than I have since endured, although, Heaven knows, they have been very great—almost unparalleled I must not, however," he continued "dwell too long on that happy period or I may exhaust your patience, my lord. Through the benevolence of that family, therefore, my father's health was so much recovered, and his mind apparently so composed, that he was again enabled to proceed on his journey. It cost my heart many a severe pang to bid adieu to such kind friends; and the more so, from the conviction I felt that I should never again enjoy the pleasure of their society.

"The second day of our arrival at Marseilles, I learnt there was a vessel on the point of sailing for Sardinia. We embarked for Cagliari; and it was with indescribable pleasure that I found the nearer we approached it, a greater animation was apparent in the countenance of

of my father. I am convinced, if any earthly circumstance was possible to have restored him to reason, it would have been the agreeable surprise of again being wafted to his native home. Stern fate, however, decreed it otherwise. A tempestuous wind drove us to the north-east of Sardinia, near the island of Asinara. Our captain knowing the imminent danger with which we were threatened, ordered the dead-lights to be put up, and the hatches to be closed. None of the passengers were allowed to remain on deck but myself; having, some time previous to the command, got lashed to the rigging by one of the sailors, I was therefore able to assist them in working at the pumps.

"The storm was dreadful," said Luzzara, shuddering as he continued to relate the fatal effects of it; "the waves kept rushing over the vessel with tremendous violence. During the pause of a gust, although all was confusion and uproar amongst the hapless crew, I fan-

cied I could distinguish, above the rest, the voice of my father calling out to me for help. A heavy groan succeeded, and the name of Cornelius was repeated. I no longer doubted; and my fears then represented him to be in the agonies of death. In a paroxysm of despair, I instantly extricated my body from the rope with which they had secured me, and made my way, although I have not the least recollection by what means I effected it, to the great cabin, the door of which had been torn off its hinges by the furious element; and there, clinging to a part of the wood-work that had supported it, I found my father."

"That was a moment of trial!" exclaimed Anselmo, who, in listening to the sorrows of his guest, had almost forgotten his own.

"It was indeed, my lord," replied Luzzara; "for at that instant our ship struck against the rocks, and so rapidly filled with water, that all hope of saving her shattered

shattered hulk was at an end. The long-boat was hoisted out—four of the passengers had entered it; by that time, with my parent in my arms, I contrived to gain the only remaining side that was left of the vessel, and implored them to admit my dying father—for as to myself I was quite indifferent; to save him was my only cry; I begged, entreated, but in vain—the boat departed. I and my poor father, with the captain, who could not be persuaded to leave the ship whilst there remained a hope of her riding out the storm, were then the last remaining persons on the wreck. With a resolution and strength, even beyond my years, and to which," continued the officer, "I now look back with astonishment, with the rope that I still held in my hand, I contrived to lash ourselves to the mast of the vessel; it parted from the wreck, and with the next wave we were thrown on shore. Not a moment, however, was to be lost in trying to be dis-

engaged from the bondage: with a knife I had in my pocket, I fortunately succeeded, and in an instant afterwards the mast again drifted out to sea.

"Our lives were thus saved, my lord," continued Luzzara, "from impending destruction. I dragged my nearly-exhausted parent from the danger of the merciless element, and having seated him in the cavity of a rock, knelt, and returned thanks to Heaven for our miraculous preservation; which so clearly demonstrated the truth of that beautiful and consoling moral to the human heart, that 'seeming calamities may, and often are found to be, real blessings;' for the boat, in which I had so vainly implored for admittance, sunk, and every soul perished.

"The captain, however, being an expert swimmer, had gained the shore in safety; and on observing us, humanely offered his assistance, and conducted us into the island. On our arriving at a small

small inn, (principally resorted to by fishermen,) the captain represented to the owners of it, by whom he was well known, our disastrous situation; and then desired that every attention should be shewn to us, as he would settle every thing to their satisfaction, on his return from Cagliari.

'I have hopes,' said this worthy man, 'of recovering, at low water, some of the property from the wreck; and you may depend on it, signior, that I shall use my utmost endeavours to recover your father's property.' I returned him many thanks for the intention," said Luzzara to the count, "although I could not be convinced there was any chance of success, from the high swell of the sea, and the wind blowing at that time so strong from the shore. In that, however, I was agreeably disappointed; for in a few hours, the captain, and some men belonging to the island, who had proffered their assistance, returned, and brought with

them three large trunks, which had been cast on the beach. One of them I fortunately recognized to be my father's containing wearing apparel, with many other articles of value.

"By this act of Providence, my lord," he continued, "although great was our loss, we were not rendered quite destitute; it enabled me to procure little comforts for my aged parent, which I could not otherwise have obtained. On the following day, our captain set sail in a small fishing-smack for Sardinia; we were to have accompanied him, had not my father's malady so much increased from the fright he had received, that his recovery was hopeless."

"In many instances of mental derangement," said Anselmo to his guest, "such an alarm is supposed to have had a beneficial effect."

"Very often, however, it has proved fatal, my lord," replied the officer; who then went on to say, that as his parent could not

be

be removed from Asinara, he entrusted to the care of the captain a packet, containing papers of consequence, which were to be delivered on his landing at Cagliari to a younger brother of his father, a respectable banker of that city; and enclosed was a letter from Cornelius to his uncle, informing him of the dangerous state of the elder Luzzara's health, and praying for a remittance, as their pecuniary resources would be soon exhausted.

Three weeks passed away without any intelligence, either of the captain or the sloop in which he had sailed for Sardinia. The pious son unremittingly endeavoured to soften the agonies of an afflicted father, who, Cornelius continued to relate to the count, expired in his arms without a groan, on the fourth week of their residence at the island of Asinara.

"New troubles then surrounded me," continued the officer; "my little finances were quite expended, and as I received

ceived no account whatever from t captain or my uncle, I knew not wh to procure sustenance even for anoth day. The landlord of the inn, an u feeling wretch, acquainted me that if did not pay his extortionate demand, h would instantly throw me into prison and therefore to avoid so cruel a fate, at dead of night, with the same rope that had rescued me from a watery grave, and which I had carefully preserved, I contrived to fasten to one of the beams of my chamber, and throwing the rest from the window, with a small bundle of clothes, which was then all my worldly property, I escaped the persecution which was threatened me. Having got safely to the ground by that means, I lost no time in hastening to the sea shore, in the hopes of finding some boat or vessel that I could take my passage in for Cagliari.

"In wandering along the rocks till the dawn of day, fancying every moment, however, I was pursued by the innkeeper

keeper and his merciless crew, I found I had arrived exactly at the spot where we had been shipwrecked. Parts of the vessel still lay on the beach; and thinking it not unlikely that I might discover some more of my treasure, I commenced a diligent search along the shore. You may think it strange, my lord," said Luzzara, "after expressing to you the fears I had of imprisonment, that I should have thus spent my time in so useless a pursuit; it was not without its benefit. My mind being thus employed, it in some degree lessened the weight of sorrow with which I was oppressed; and as it was at a distance from the inhabited part of the island, I knew would serve (from the number of excavations in the rocks) as a good place of concealment, in case of necessity. It likewise came to my recollection, that the trunks which had been found by the captain were still in the possession of my savage host; and therefore consoled myself that he would detain them

them as an equivalent for his demand on me.

"That day, therefore, and the succeeding one, I occupied in that manner, and in endeavouring to procure fresh water; for having subsisted only on shell-fish, I was almost famished. The latter, however, proved fruitless; not a rivulet or spring was to be found. I then ascended the rocky heights to survey the country, in hopes of discovering some fisherman's hut, to which I could repair and obtain the relief I stood so greatly in need of. My strength was almost exhausted, and——"

"Dreadful was your situation!" interrupted Anselmo; "but I trust you soon experienced relief?"

"Thanks to Heaven I did, my lord!" replied the young man; "for in my walk for that purpose, I observed at a distance, with indescribable emotions of rapture, a ship apparently pressing on, under a croud of sail, for that part of the island.

Fearful,

Fearful, however, the mariners might alter her course, I loudly hailed them, and kept waving my handkerchief in the air as a token of distress. From the serenity of the weather, and an unruffled sea, I could distinctly hear the voices of the men on board, vociferating—'We are becalmed, captain, and shall not be able to bring her to an anchor till the morning.'

"They did not answer my signals; my heart again sunk within me, and I threw myself on the beach in despair. I had not been long in that posture ere I discovered something lying on the beach, which glittered with astonishing lustre: at first," continued Luzzara, "I supposed it to be the reflection of the sun on a fossil; but on rising, and observing it more minutely, I perceived it was a small gold box, inlaid with the precious stones of rubies, emeralds, and amethysts; and on the lid were engraved the letters of

of E. C. R., studded with pearls. They were not the initials I had seen on the trunks at the inn; yet I concluded it must have belonged to one of the passengers that were with us in the vessel, and who had unfortunately lost their lives in the boat."

"That was a seasonable relief for you, signior."

"Not so, my lord," resumed the officer; "my conscience would not suffer me to obtain it by such means; and therefore the only pleasure I received on finding the treasure, was the thought that at some future period I might have the gratification of restoring it to the friends of the owner. Whilst I was admiring the brilliancy of the exterior appearance, it opened, (from my having unknowingly touched the spring,) and my admiration was then converted into astonishment," said the young man; "for the enclosed presented to my view a miniature

iature of one of the most beautiful of omen the imagination could possibly elineate."

"Have you the picture now in your ossession?"

"It is, my lord," said Luzzara, in no nall degree of surprise, from the impe- ioüsness of the count in asking the uestion; who continued—

"Then pray indulge me with a sight f it."

The officer replied — "With much leasure, on his return to his apartments the citadel."

Anselmo, on requesting pardon for the terruption of the eventful history, Luz- ra then went on—"So flattering to me your attention, my lord, that I cannot fuse acquainting you with the sequel of y adventures.

"The contemplation of so fine a *chef euvre* of the art of painting, rendered e for a time forgetful of the distresses th which I was surrounded; the rapid approach

approach of night, however, brought me to recollection of the necessity of procuring sustenance and shelter. I was certain of the vessel being at safe anchor, and that it was destined for Asinara; yet I had not strength to continue my course in search of the relief I stood so much in need of, and therefore was obliged again to rest in a cavity of the rocks.

"From extreme weakness and distress of mind, although hard was my pillow," continued Luzzara, "I was not long sensible of the wretchedness of my fate. A profound sleep stole over my senses, and from which I did not awake until an unusual noise (for so retired a situation) disturbed my repose. On awaking, and looking around to discover the cause of it, judge of my astonishment and horror, my lord," said the officer, "when I found that it proceeded from the sea pouring into the cavern with tremendous violence, and no possible retreat appeared from its fury! The fear of an approaching

approaching and certain death is natural to all of the human race—I felt it so. With the greatest difficulty I climbed up part of the cavern. I had but just ascended when an immense rush of the waters carried away the lower part of the rock on which I was standing. It was then, my lord," continued Luzzara, "I thought my sorrows were almost over, and my fate inevitable. In an instant afterwards the remaining structure of that part of the cave gave way, and I was precipitated into the sea."

"Great God!" now exclaimed the Count Anselmo, at this dreadful relation of the officer's, "have you then risen from the dead?"

"I should almost have thought so, my lord," replied the officer, "had not a faithful friend assured me to the contrary; and that I have long since learnt nothing is impossible in the wonderful train of causes belonging to the Divine Providence.

"The



their boat near to the point of
which had fallen with me; a
time they were again embarkin
ship, on hearing my cries, and
that I had risen in the water, an
hands were imploring relief, c
crew, with that humanity an
which is so peculiar a characte
British sailor, (for they were
men,) instantly jumped into th
swam to my assistance. He la
the skirts of my coat, and bro
safety to the boat. The po
however, almost exhausted, ag

"Thus, my lord," continued Luzzara, "was I a second time preserved from a watery grave. The dangers I experienced in that short voyage from Marseilles to and from the island of Asinara, gave me such a distaste for that mode of conveyance, that I solemnly vowed, if I once could set my foot on land, I would never attempt another. But to my story."

"With pleasure, signior, for I am greatly interested in it," said the count; "yet, as the night is now far advanced, and yourself much fatigued with the recounting of your adventures, I shall forego my curiosity to hear the remainder until the morning." The officer bowed acquiescence; and Anselmo, on conducting Luzzara and his companion to the apartment, said, on passing his own—"Now, gentlemen, if you are fearful I should wish to elude justice, by making my escape from Turin, here are couches in this room on which you may repose."

"My lord," replied Luzzara, "although,

confidence in him; and soon "
ture's sweet restorer, balmy sleep
terated, for a time, their various

CHAP. III.

' I wake, emerging from a sea of dreams
Tumultuous; where my wreck'd, desponding thought,
From wave to wave of fancied misery
At random drove, her helm of reason lost;
Though now restor'd, 'tis only change of pain,
A bitter change, severer for severe:
The day, too short for my distress! and night,
Ev'n in the zenith of her dark domain,
Is sunshine to the colour of my fate."

: an early hour of the morn Luzzara
d his companion awoke, greatly re-
shed from their midnight slumbers; and
descending to the saloon, met their
ible prisoner, whose haggard and de-
onding looks struck them with the sin-
rest pity; and the more so, on their
inquiring

inquiring how the count had passed the night? was answered, "Very ill indeed. I have," he continued, "suffered, in imagination, the tortures of a Tantalus. Let not, however, my griefs disturb the harmony in which last night we parted. I likewise wish to be informed at what time of the day the duke is expected to be in Turin?"

"By the hour of four, my lord."

"It is well," replied the count. "Now then, signior Luzzara, favour me with recounting your escape from the island of Asinara." Having finished their repast, the officer therefore resumed his history:

"It is always with heartfelt pleasure that I dwell on the humanity I received whilst on board the Antelope, (the vessel to which I was conducted by the seamen who had saved my life, and to whom they belonged). In a few hours I recovered from my alarm; when on faithfully relating to their English commander the perils I had undergone, and

the

the fear I had of returning to that island, on account of the inhospitable landlord of the auberge, he generously offered to settle his extortionate demand; and likewise, as the ship would touch at Cagliari, to carry me there free of every expence. This offer I eagerly embraced, from the wish I had of visiting the birth-place of my lamented father, and the satisfaction I should derive in an interview with my uncle, from whom I had not obtained any answer in return for the letter sent in the charge of captain Montebello. I declined going again on shore, thinking it more advisable to forward a remittance for the innkeeper on my arrival at Cagliari.

"At the expiration of a week," continued the officer, "the vessel sailed for that port. On my landing, I immediately repaired to the house of my uncle, and was received by him, on his learning my name and family, with unfeigned pleasure. I had the mortification of hear-

ing that he had neither seen nor hear of captain Montebello; and that th packet had not come to hand. The win having been fair for several days aft his departure from Asinara, I therefo began to suspect some treachery in th captain's conduct towards me, the lette being of the utmost consequence. M uncle deeply lamented the loss of h brother, for whom, although so mar years separated, he had ever retained th tenderest affection. 'Cornelius,' sa he, 'you shall never want a home whil I have one; but as to Marsias——'- 'What of him, my good sir?' I quick inquired. — 'He has,' said my uncl 'within these few months, absented hir self from his situation in the castle Oristagni; such strange conduct caus suspicions of a very unfavourable natur and——" Luzzara was continuing, b the count instantly interrupted him that part of his narrative by saying, wi peculiar sternness — "Have you no discover

discovered the retreat of your brother?"

"For your sake, my lord, I am grieved to say we have not heard the least intelligence of him." — "At what period did he make his escape from Oristagni?" — "Five years has nearly expired since that event," replied Luzzara, and paused, as if fearful of continuing the relation. The features of Anselmo, however, assumed a more pleasing aspect, and then turning to his informant, said—"I request, signior, to hear the sequel of your history."

"Well, my lord, to be brief then," replied the officer, "I shall only say, that after the variety of misfortunes I had endured, I resided peacefully at the house of my uncle at Cagliari for several months; during which period, we heard that the fishing sloop, in which captain Montebello had embarked from Asinara, was taken by an Algerine corsair, and himself, with the rest of the crew, made prisoners, and carried to Africa. Thus ended all my

hopes of regaining the letters intrusted to his charge, or of ever having the satisfaction of repaying the many civilities I had received from him. It was a serious loss to me, for many of them belonged to the gentleman who in France had so generously exerted himself in behalf of my family; and therefore, supposing there was some duplicity on my part, he withdrew his friendship. I was left an entire dependant on my uncle's bounty. Young, thoughtless, and inexperienced, I had never applied myself to any kind of study, except that of reading old musty legends of warriors, who, by romantic deeds in arms, had acquired a deathless glory. My uncle perceiving I had an invincible objection for any commercial line of business, then offered to procure me a situation in the army. Nothing could be more accordant to my wishes or turn of mind than such a proposal. The unsettledness of my disposition loved variety; besides, I knew that visiting foreign

foreign countries, observing their manners, customs, and partaking of their amusements, would tend to divert the fatal passion I had indulged for Horatia. She had, with her father and mother, again embarked for England—that happy land; however, I could have no hopes of being able to follow them; and even if it were otherwise, the insurmountable barrier remained to prevent an union of felicity.

"In less than a month my uncle performed his promise, in obtaining my present commission in the Piedmontese army; and to you, my lord," continued Luzzara, with an humble obeisance to count Anselmo, "am I principally indebted for it."—"To me, signior?"—"Yes, my honoured lord," he resumed, "to you, although, perhaps from the lapse of time, and momentous affairs with the state, it may have escaped your memory."—"It has indeed," replied the count.—"Do you recollect the name of

Veroli, my lord?"—"Certainly I do. Is that gentleman your relation?"—"In truth, he was only half-brother to my late father from a second marriage. You will now then no longer be surprised, Gondolphe," said Luzzara, in addressing the other officer, "that I should have felt repugnant to take in custody, as a prisoner, the noble count Anselmo, from whom I have derived the benefits I at this very period enjoy."

"You have only done your duty, signior; yet, to a man of your liberal sentiments, I cannot help wishing you a more honourable employment."—"My lord, I return you my grateful thanks."

"It is sufficient," answered the count; and desirous of interrupting his meditated vote of obligation, said—"Although I suppose you have now come to a conclusion of your adventures, signior, you have forgot to acquaint me of the fate of your lost sister?"

A heavy sigh from Luzzara succeeded this question of Anselmo's. He then replied—

plied—"All my endeavours to regain that treasure, my lord, have proved fruitless; I therefore pray to Heaven that my sister, dearest Isabel, the tender pledge left to my care by her dying mother, is now restored to a maternal bosom. If I thought otherwise, that she drew on her existence by dishonour, I should go mad. This arm might do a deed, to revenge the ndelible stain, that would render life tereafter an insupportable burthen."

These agoniz ed sensations of the young nan, at the mention of his sister, whom e had so fondly loved, deprived him of urther utterance. The romantic wildess of his character was not, however, ispleasing to Anselmo, Luzzara havng observed, throughout the whole of is relation, the most profound respect or his auditor; and therefore carefully voided dwelling on the subject of the astle of Oristagni, which he well knew ould have deeply agitated the feelings f count Anselmo.

The strange occurrences which had taken place in the island of Cagliari about that period, were yet wrapt in mystery. Many of the secrets of the prison-house could have been unfolded by the officer but yet, as they could not have lessened the anxiety of the count, and must have implicated his brother in several of the transactions, Luzzara determined with him they should remain inviolably concealed.

A servant now entered the saloon to apprize his lord that a messenger was arrived from the duke of Savoy. "Admit him," said Anselmo. On the courier being ushered into the apartment, he delivered a sealed paper to captain Luzzara, and again departed. The officer shuddered as he perused the instructions the letter contained; and then presented it, with extreme reluctance, to his noble prisoner. It was a peremptory mandate from the duke to Luzzara, for count Anselmo to be conveyed from his mansion into

into the citadel. An apartment for his reception was to be got ready immediately, there to remain till further orders; and no person to have access to him on any account whatever.

Anselmo having read this severe prohibition from his sovereign, exclaimed—"Such a resolution fits a Roman senate, but not the milder laws of Piedmont!" and then addressing himself to the officers, said—"I perceive, gentlemen, by this paper, you are authorized to treat me as a common felon."—"As vassals of the state," replied Luzzara, "we are obliged to perform our duty to our sovereign, or we should incur, for our disobedience, condign punishment. I have no power to alleviate your sufferings, my lord, but in recommending the healing plant of patience, to soften undeserved calamities. Malice may flourish for a while—the brightest star is oft o'ershadowed by the passing cloud; yet it will, guided by its

Omniscient Creator, at length break forth with undiminished lustre."

"I'll hear no more. Your flowing eloquence is now ill-judged, unsalutary," retorted Anselmo. "It cannot cure a distempered mind, nor change my destiny. In a loathsome prison am I fated to linger out my days, where even the light of heaven does not dare to enter; shut out from the intercourse of every friendly being—even that of my wife, and my only remaining supporter, signior Rodolphus. Oh God!" continued the enraged count, "that I should live to witness all my honours, the services I have done to my countrymen, fade away from their remembrance, and even assisting to plunge me headlong into the vortex of destruction!"

The tear of agony burst from his tortured soul, as he exclaimed—"Oh Almeria! to you am I indebted for all this variety of wretchedness! I have forfeited

ited the sacred vow I made to an
ring father — lost the estimation
ny prince — and covered with dis-
e the revered, the noble name of
house of Anselmo."

he feelings of the count being
ght up to desperation, he vocife-
ly continued — " Come, soldiers,
me to my prison—bind me in chains
am now prepared to receive every
gnity." — " Do not abandon hope,
lord," said Luzzara, with much com-
ration.

Hope is a cheat—it deludes where
it promises! My sun is set for ever—
g, long night of darkness has succeed-
chase away every idea of happiness."
count then sat down to write a few
lines to signior Rodolphus. On
ng the note he said—" Am I permit-
gentlemen, to deliver this to my
ant before I depart?" Gondolphe
ied—

"It is not possible we can de
that favour, my lord, althougl
against our instructions."—"I thai
signior. Now, then, I am ready to
you."

On their passing through the
hall, the count gave the letter in
of his valet, with an order for
stant departure to Oldenzo. The
conducted Anselmo to the e:
which was in waiting at the door
mansion, with a strong guard to
their prisoner.

Not a word was spoken. The d
appearance of the count impres
numerous assemblage with rev
awe. Anselmo likewise obse
guarded silence; and not until t
arrived within the precincts of t
del, and immerged him within its
walls, did he utter a single se
On hearing, however, the iron
close as the officers departed,

being left alone to think on the horrors of his dreadful situation, then Anselmo exclaimed — " Farewell liberty — welcome death !"

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Ah, me ! what hand can touch the strings so fine—
Who up the lofty diapason roll
Such sweet, such sad, such solemn airs divine,
Then let them down again into the soul?
Now rising love they fann'd; now pleasing dole
They breath'd, in tender musings, through the heart;
And now a graver, sacred strain they stole,
As when seraphic hands a hymn impart:
Wild warbling nature all, above the reach of art.

THOMSON.

THE storm which was hovering over the head of count Anselmo at Turin, had not as yet extended its baneful influence to the castle of Valleroy. Almeria felt a presentiment of future evil, but which, at the unexpected return of her beloved

on, was for a time obliterated from her memory, every thought being then concentrated amidst her circling friends. The uncommon interest, however, that Montuban appeared to take for the welfare of the adopted daughter of her husband, occasioned her serious uneasiness; and he more so when she reflected, from several circumstances that had lately transpired in conversation with the count, the utter impossibility of his ever attaining the object of his wishes.

At an early hour in the morning, she took her usual walk round the domains of the castle; and on passing near the temple, which the night before had so much attracted her curiosity, a man, apparently wrapt in meditation, was leaning against the portico. "This, then," thought the countess Anselmo, "is its mysterious inhabitant, who has excited such alarm amongst my domestics;" and therefore determining to develop so singular a circumstance, Almeria

ria approached towards the temple; when, on accosting the supposed stranger, she recognised Montauban.—"My son!" said the astonished countess; "so soon abroad!—what can have disturbed your repose?"—"My dear mother," answered Albert, "a soldier's life, you know, is accustomed to action; repose is a word, therefore, he is but little acquainted with. In the pleasant scenery of Valleroy, and whilst inhaling the refreshing breeze from the Mediterranean, I feel my health renewed."

"Ah!" replied his mother, in deep dejection, "your looks, my son, but ill express what you would fain wish me to believe. I am sure you are ill, very ill, and require every possible attention. Come, come, my love," she continued, "return with me to the castle, and I will send again for that worthy man, Lodovico."—"He will certainly complete my cure," said Montauban, ironically. "I shall now be dispatched, like a cannon-shot, to the

alms above."—"Have you then no
on of the surgical knowledge of
vico?"—"None—the very sight of
s an antidote to my recovery."
this answer of Montauban the
ess angrily exclaimed—"Beware,
g man, of cherishing in your breast
thies merely from unfavourable
rances—the diamond is not less
ble for being enclosed with a rough
ior—if you do, your peace of mind
e endangered by the most trivial
nstances, and you will become
sh, morose, and ungovernable."
t was silent, thinking it most pru-
not to reveal his adventure with
onfessor of Santa Maria, particu-
as he found Lodovico was so much
our at the castle of Valleroy. He
regretted the expressing of that dis-
o his mother; and yet more, the
lcome manner with which he had
ed the monk on the preceding
night,

night, on reflecting that it might, in its consequences, be fatal to the happiness of Eleanor, whose welfare was dearer to him than his own.

Montauban now followed the countess to the castle; and on entering the saloon, Albert could not conceal the disappointment he felt at the absence of Eleanor. How much did he wish then to inquire after her health, and the reason why they were deprived of her presence, had not his faltering tongue refused its office! Hope, fear, and grief, rose up at once in his soul, and with all their attendant anxieties, distracted him. Love assuredly had wrought an entire reformation in the mind of Montauban. From the gay, the wild and unthinking youth, who had, by the pleasing versatility of his mental powers, added charms to society, he was now become not only melancholy and thoughtful, but also apparently neglectful of his person; and as such, could

ould not help engaging the notice of
he countess, who therefore felt for her
n the most poignant anguish.

Their morning repast being finished,
id the servants retired, she began to
uestion him respecting his long silence;
which Albert evasively answered, that
supposed, in the confusion of conti-
ual warfare, the letters that he had writ-
n to her had been lost, several of the
uriers having been taken on their
ute by the enemy.

He then instantly changed the subject
discourse, by inquiring of her the pe-
od count Anselmo was expected to re-
rn to Valleroy? and on learning that it
ould not be for several weeks, it im-
rted to him much satisfaction. His
other soon after repaired to her dres-
ng-room; and during that interval,
ontauban walked in the avenue, in the
ope of discovering the apartment be-
nging to Eleanor, and catching a
impse of her at the windows. Disap-
pointed,

pointed, however, in this expectation, again bent his way towards the temp the romantic situation of which had l fore so greatly interested him. N a murmuring brook, overhung with spreading leaves of sycamore, mulber and orange trees, was a rustic bench, twined with eglantine and myrtle. T retirement accorded well with the mel choly of his soul. Albert reclined hi self on the mossy couch; and on cc templating the wild and pleasing varie of the scene, one side terminating wi a view of the gothic temple, whic from its tasteful architecture and de seclusion, appeared to have been a f vourite retreat for the muses, on t other side was just discernible t gloomy grandeur of the monastery Santa Maria, and the majestic Ape nines—"In that dread abode," exclai ed Montauban, "I bartered all that dear to man on earth—a content mind!" and continued, in extreme a

gitati

ıtion — " Oh Eleanor! did you but now the torments I suffer from the cold, ıfeeling with which you treat me, sure- you would pity me—would throw off e garb of apathy that surrounds your ery faculty, and commiserate the dis- ıcted Albert!" The mournful aerial unds of a harp now broke through the llness of the morn, and terminated the liloquy of the lover.

He listened: it was an address to the ity, accompanied by a female voice, ıt enchanted his every sense. Mont- ban instantly arose from his seat, and ected his steps towards the temple, m whence the sounds proceeded. He ain listened. In seraphic harmony : sublime strain re-echoed through the ods and extensive domains of Valle- y, summoning all Nature's work, and ery earthly being to join in praises of e great, omniscient, and all-wise Pro- lence — " Sacred, substantial, never- ling bliss!"

In

In mute astonishment, and rapturous admiration, Albert now hastened to the temple, fancying that the invisible musician might be his adored Eleanor, who thus delightfully sought to interrupt his mental agonies by religion's powerful triumph. On his arriving at the portico, however, the voice instantly ceased, and all was again silent. He knocked softly at the door—repeated it, but no answer was returned. He reverberated the name of Eleanor—it died away in mournful echo through the colonades of the ancient structure, and was succeeded by another, still dwelling on the name of the lovely maid. This second echo having terminated, greatly to the surprise of Montauban, who was now convinced the temple was inhabited, he therefore determined to unravel the mystery which belonged to it. He scaled one of the columns of the portico; and having nearly gained the height of one of the grated windows, which was half open, a large

written

:n paper was discovered, containing
llowing words:—" *Profane not holy walls—obey, stranger, or in-death will follow the rash attempt.*"
aper was then withdrawn by the un-n, and the shutter instantly closed.
Albert was surprised at the first oc-nce—the renewal of the echo, how greater did that surprise increase erusing the foregoing sentence, is-; so severe a prohibition to desist further curiosity. On the impetu-haracter of Albert, to which was join-ie most undaunted courage, it had ther effect than stimulating him to ed in his perilous undertaking. first thought that entered into the of Montauban, was a suspicion of ranger being a favoured rival; and lousy is the most ungovernable of assions, and the hardest to over-, the young soldier was not to be ntimidated from his design. He con-d to ascend, which, from the strong

roots

roots of ivy that encircled the walls of
was easy to accomplish. To this fea
height Albert was now endeavouring to
tain; whilst resting, however, on a p
of the mutilated walls of the structu
to recruit his strength for the remaind
a dreadful scream assailed his ears, a
coming in the direction of the castle,
looked towards the avenue, and beh
his mother hastening towards him, su
ported by one of the servants. Mo
auban, therefore, no longer sought
execute his project of forcing himse
into this mysterious habitation, but
render assistance to the countess, su
posing some recent alarm at Valler
had occasioned from her those cries
distress. Owing to his anxiety, a
haste to descend from the perilous heig
he had attained, it was with extreme di
ficulty that Albert could keep himse
from being precipitated into the strea
beneath. He caught hold of the woo
work belonging to one of the windo
whi

which, although it prevented his fall, it afforded no means for his further descent.

The agitation of his mother, who had by this time arrived at the portico of the temple, may be easier imagined than described. Ladders were brought by the servants, who, on having first distinguished their young master in this dangerous situation, had acquainted the countess, and was now hastening to the spot in hopes of relieving him. They were severally tried, but with no effect; none would reach the height of the windows. Lupino was the only one who attempted to break open the door, from the idea the rest entertained of its being the receptacle of evil spirits. That project, however, was no more successful than the former one—it resisted his utmost efforts. In an instant afterwards, however, a loud crash was heard—the framework of the window gave way, and, together with Montauban, fell to the ground with tremendous violence.

The utmost confusion now prevailed and sorrow was depicted on every countenance. In a state of insensibility, Albert was conveyed by the attendants to the castle, where for some hours he lay apparently bereft of all animation.

In the mean time, Eleanor, unconscious of being the unhappy cause of the present sufferings of the young soldier, was enjoying the comforts of an undisturbed repose. Wearied with the exertion of the preceding evening, and somewhat recovered from the alarm of her adventure at the cavern, towards morning she had fallen into a profound sleep. The usual summons, even from Lauretta, of announcing breakfast, was disregarded by Eleanor, who was therefore spared the pang intended for her, of witnessing the sad effect of her lover's jealous and impetuous disposition. The second intimation she received of the lateness of the hour, was the dinner-bell for the servants to assemble, and the

hall

hall-clock striking twelve. Eleanor then rose precipitately from her couch; and having equipt herself, was hastily descending to the saloon to rejoin her friends, when she was met by Lauretta, who first acquainted her with the accident which had befallen Montauban, and the uneasiness of his mother in consequence of it—"Oh, let me hasten to console her then!" exclaimed Eleanor.—"Not yet, dear signora," she replied; "for my mistress, the countess, strictly enjoined me not to inform you of my young lord's illness, because we none of us think he will die."

Lauretta, perceiving the countenance of Eleanor change to a deathly paleness, now endeavoured to soften the latter part of her communication, by aysing—"Ah, signora, do you believe I am in earnest? Dear, dear me, why, my young lord himself told me to say so on purpose to frighten you; but you may

depend upon it, my lady, I will bring no more of his messages, as they make you so very unhappy. Oh, oh!" continued the wary girl, pretending to laugh, "what a strange, incomprehensible little fellow Love is!—how sudden and unaccountably does he metamorphose even the most sensible part of the creation (I mean, my lady, us women)! for as to the men, they are undoubtedly the most fanciful, unintelligible, headstrong, simple souls of God's earth."

A faint smile appeared on the countenance of Eleanor, at this singular description; and as she was no disciple of such doctrine, said—"I think not with you, Lauretta; so pray now do lead me to the countess Anselmo, that I may learn something more satisfactory respecting the health of my beloved Albert than what you have thought proper to acquaint me with."—"Indeed, signora," she replied, "it is the countess's express or-

ders

ders not to be disturbed, because my lady is writing to her brother, signior Orvillé."

"I suppose by that order, then, Lauretta, I am to return to my chamber, and there wait for the further commands of the countess?"—"Yes, signora," she repeated, "that is precisely the wish of my lady, who thinks retirement the only means of composing your spirits; of which, she supposes, you must be so much in need, after the alarming occurrence you met with at the cavern last night. You may depend upon it, signora," continued Lauretta, "the sigh you heard proceeded from no living lips; no, no, dead ones, I warrant me; and the same which haunts that frightful temple, and nightly walks through the shrubbery."

"To what do you allude?" replied Eleanor, with much surprise.—"Why, signora, I say it was an apparition; and what I never heard of before—a black

one."—"Ridiculous! Go, go, and prepare my coffee — I'll more." With this command the less, half-witted attendant was o comply; and Eleanor being nov from the irksomeness of such tion, again sought her chambe she endeavoured to calm her re respecting the health of Montai to take into consideration his proposals, so often tendered, a often hitherto rejected.

To a heart like Eleanor's, fraught with every noble an feeling, the complaints that her made of her want of confiden honour, and of her affecting precaution, occasioned her se easiness; and the more so, wh flected on the many obstacl must arise, without a peculiar tion of Providence, to prevent tous an union. The very n conduct of count Anselmo, e

her earliest years—the severe lessons of morality, implanted on her mind during her residence in the convent by the confessor Lodovico — and her orphan state, all combined to distract, and to render, in her opinion, useless, every resolution she had at intervals formed to favour the wishes, and comply with the entreaties of her lover.

The more she reflected upon it, the more was she convinced of the many difficulties that accompanied such an undertaking. In the same indecision of mind did that day pass, and two others, without her having come to any determination proper to communicate to Montauban, as a final resolve, to which, she thought, as a woman of principle, she must hereafter adhere.

In the mean while, Albert was suffering yet greater inquietude from mental and bodily anguish. On his return to reason, the pain he before felt from his

wound was much increased since his late [illegible] accident; nor did the second appearance [illegible] of the monk Lodovico, who had been [illegible] instantly sent for to attend him, contribute in the least to relieve it. Not all the entreaties of his mother, or the representations of the confessor, of the fatal effects which might arise from his obstinacy, could persuade Montauban to accept the proffered services of Lodovico. Albert's former antipathy had now risen to a perfect abhorrence, even at the very sight of him.

Trembling with inward rage, and again almost deprived of his senses, through his unfortunate impetuosity of disposition, Montauban caught up his sabre, which was lying unsheathed on the table, and exclaimed, whilst presenting it to the monk, "If it is my life you seek, this, this is the recipe for all disorders—plunge it deep, Lodovico, then shall I be soon at rest!"

An

An expression of terror from the countess Anselmo accompanied this wild, unpardonable action. Lodovico wrested from Montauban the dreadful implement of destruction, and th owing it with equal violence on the ground, it shivered into a thousand pieces. "Behold, rash youth!" disdainfully exclaimed Lodovico, whilst pointing to the scattered remnants of the sabre; "from this, I prophesy, you will repent your conduct to the monk Lodovico—" He was continuing: with an ironical tone, Albert, however, interrupted him, by saying—"Perhaps I may—I shall be obliged to purchase another."

"Insult upon insult!" he retorted—"I can no longer stay—yet mark my words, bold boy, nor ever expect forgiveness from the deeply-wronged Lodovico!"

The countess Anselmo now followed the monk from her son's apartment, and entreated, with tearful eyes, in the most

urgent manner, that he would pardon the ill behaviour of Albert, whose deranged intellects she was certain had alone been the cause of it.

The monk knew better; yet considering, and at the same time respecting the feelings of a mother, he appeared perfectly satisfied with her apology; and apparently to convince the countess of its reality, and allay the anxiety and grief she felt for her son's ill state of health, Lodovico wrote several prescriptions for Montauban, and having extolled the particular virtues of them, said, with much firmness, and extreme dignity of manner, "Although it will be impossible for me again to enter these domains, whilst Albert de Montauban is resident at Valleroy, yet will I most chearfully, from the great respect I owe to its possessor, at all times tender my services in her behalf." He caught hold of the hand of the countess—pressed it to his bosom, and with the utmost warmth, and peculiar tender-

derness

ss of feeling, exclaimed—" From
ou! do I revere your exemplary vir-
as the *wife*———" Almeria invo-
rily shuddered. There was a marked,
usual energy, in the expression of
word, which forcibly struck the
gs of the countess; and as the
observed the emotion he had oc-
ned, the sentence was felt unfinish-
rticularly as no explanation was re-
d. Lodovico then instantly relin-
ed the trembling hand which he had
with such impassioned fervour, and
tly taking his leave, departed from
astle.

he mean while, Albert, who was by
eans in such ill health as his mo-
fears had represented him to be,
ismissed his attendants; and being
again at liberty to retrace in his
the singular prohibition of the
own inhabitant of the temple, the
led passions of jealousy, hope, and
ir, by turns affected, soothed, agi-

tated, and distressed him; and thus did Montauban commune with himself respecting the object of it—"Unfeeling obdurate girl!" he exclaimed; "although love is a stranger to your heart, yet, from the vaunted sensibility you say you possess, it certainly, to realize that character, should have prompted you to have pitied my sufferings—to have assuaged them by candidly avowing your preference of another: such ingenuousness would have relieved my sufferings, and time and long absence would insensibly have taught me to have forgotten you." And continued—"Cruel, cruel Eleanor! If any misfortune had unhappily afflicted you, I would have defied every earthly barrier but what I would have flown to your assistance. In the battle's heat—amid the din of arms—when horror was surrounding me on every side—even in those perilous scenes I have often repeated your name with fervour; and, inspired by the remembrance of

the

the blissful moments I had passed in your society, with renewed ardour have I combatted for glory. Oh Heavens!" exclaimed Montauban, in anguish, "how have all my hopes, my expectations, vanished!" A deep sigh succeeded these unpleasant ideas; and continued, "Fool that I am, to have cherished so delusive a dream, so falsely represented the balm of life, when I know, by experience, it is the misery of it. How can any one be at rest under the influence of desiring some unattained good! Impossible!" he exclaimed with vehemence. "It is that alone, then, which drives men mad, and will make me so, if I do not resolutely determine to conquer it."

Albert now paced his chamber with hurried and unequal steps, unheeding the representations of Lupino, who had now entered it, and on observing the distressed state of his mind, was earnestly requesting him to suffer the wound in his arm to be dressed, and to be more composed.

was ever at work to undermine and to destroy the least glimpse of repose that might sooth the already too-long harrassed spirits of the countess. Regret for the loss of her first husband, and pity for Anselmo, whose impassioned love for her had certainly been the cause of his retiring from the dignified situation he had, for so many years, most successfully occupied for his own advantage, and yet more for his country's, distressed, and indeed deeply afflicted the too-lovely Almeria, whose charms of person, and amiableness of disposition, had ever rendered her a theme of admiration with the men, and truly obnoxious to her own sex—they envied and despised her. This dislike was not diminished by Almeria's late marriage with count Anselmo, for whom many a female heart in secret sighed in vain; and the disappointment in the attaining that splendid alliance had greatly increased their hatred; the lamentable

able effects of which will be but too fully exemplified in the following pages of this history.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

As when the winds, ascending by degrees,
First move the whitening surface of the seas;
The billows float in order to the shore;
The wave behind rolls on the wave before;
Till, with the growing storm, the deeps arise,
Foam o'er the rocks, and thunder to the skies:
So to the fight the thick battalions throng;
Shields urg'd on shields, and men drove men al
Sedate and silent move the num'rous bands:
No sound, no whisper, but their chief's comma
Those only heard; with awe the rest obey,
As if some god had snatch'd their voice away.

POPE's I

To return, however, to Albert de M auban, whose approach to con cence, within these few days past been so promising as to induce hi

r to request his company the follow-
; morning to breakfast in the saloon.
ɔert eagerly attended the summons;
l their repast being finished, various
ɔics of conversation ensued, the more
eresting to Almeria, as it principally
erred to those engagements with the
:my in which Albert de Montauban
l so conspicuously displayed his cou-
ge and active zeal for the noble cause
which he had embarked. One of those
ploits in particular engaged the atten-
n of the countess.

" The recollection is painful," said Al-
rt, on his commencing it, " yet, as my
ɔther is desirous to have that memo-
ɔle action recounted to her, it becomes
: to comply." At that instant the door
the saloon opened, and Eleanor, who
ɔresented the goddess of peace, attend-
by the Paphian queen with all her
tle train of loves, appeared, at once to
ften, exhilarate, and shed fresh glory

on

on the heroic enterprises of the youthful warrior

A gleam of joy now animated the countenance of Montauban, as he rapturously gazed on the object of his divinity, and who, with angelic sweetness, congratulated him on his returning health. The countess, hitherto a silent spectator of this second interview of the lovers, now, however, with marked displeasure, observed to Eleanor that her flattering, and all-subduing eloquence, was extremely ill timed, and an injustice, as her son never looked so ill, or was so really indisposed, as at the present period—"Such an unfounded expression," she continued, "is therefore highly improper in you, signora, to advance, as it will only tend to render him neglectful of the means by which he might restore that health, I grieve to say, Albert has lost."

This severe retort struck like a dagger to

o the heart of Eleanor; the smile of wel-
ome flew from her beauteous face—a
embling tear stole down her cheek;
nd the look she directed to her lover, be-
ond the skill of the most renowned
ainter to attempt to portray, was ex-
ressive of her distress. On hearing this
npleasant information of his health, she
ould instantly have retired, had not the
ountess, immediately reflecting on the
nreasonable warmth with which she had
oken, now requested her to remain,
hilst her son continued to relate his ad-
ntures. Montauban, inwardly delight-
l at the softened tone in which his mo-
er had now addressed herself to Eleanor,
ith trembling eagerness conducted the
mid girl to the same couch on which
e countess was then seated. She re-
ived her *protegée* with pleasure; and
e little difference which had occurred
etween them was soon obliterated from
eir memory, in the uncommon in-
rest they evinced at the following rela-
tion

tion of Albert, who exclaimed—" It was a victorious day for the Piedmontese; yet, as it exhibited so many scenes of woe, my soul recoils at the idea of rehearsing deeds of glory, when they are so deeply stained by acts of inhumanity. To particularize them would be impossible. Some few unfortunate subjects, however, of the surviving victims of a too-ambitious monarch, I hope I shall live to see restored to their homes, their families, and their native country.

" On the sixth of September last," continued Montauban, " after a tedious march over uncultivated and cheerless mountains, our troops approached the suburbs of Turin, headed by the duke of Savoy and the brave prince Eugene. It was at the close of evening that we halted beneath the hill of the Capuchins, and the adjacent villages, with the intention of resting there for several days to recruit the harrassed spirits of our brave men, who were almost exhausted with fatigue

and

and hunger, our supplies having previously been taken on their route by the enemy. Good accommodation in so destructive a warfare was not to be expected; yet such as it afforded, we were truly grateful for. The cheerful song and exhilarating glass went merrily round, being apparently in the most perfect security from any attack by the French, whose main army we then believed to be many leagues distant.

"For the first time during our march of fourteen days," said Albert, "I obtained a few hours of comfortable rest, having retired early from my gay companions for that purpose. About midnight I heard the drums beat to arms. In the utmost consternation I threw on my clothes, and descending into the street, I met one of our officers, who, with three soldiers, were bringing to the guard a prisoner belonging to the enemy. He was taken in the act of reconnoitring the outposts of our army, the greater part being

being encamped on the surrounding mountains; and from this man they were apprized, that with an immense force the French general, Feuillade, intended to give us battle on the succeeding day. Not a moment was lost then in preparing to meet this unexpected attack. To my question," added Albert, "if prince Eugene was acquainted with this information of the prisoner, to whose veracity, perhaps, there might be some doubt? I received for answer, that our noble commander had been, for several hours, with his aid-de-camps, accompanied likewise by an engineer, surveying the heights, and was then inspecting and marking out the ground for the combat.

"In an instant almost after I had received this intelligence, I was mounted on my charger," said Montaubàn, "and anxious for the contest, rodè off to the encampment, where I found all the men drawn out, and the prince, in the midst of the ranks, encouraging his troops for the

the expected battle. 'One more struggle for victory,' he exclaimed, 'will terminate our glorious campaign! Be steady at your posts, my comrades, and the day is our own.' With one voice they vociferated—'We will conquer or die!' Never did I witness such eagerness—such wild enthusiasm, to prove what they had so nobly asserted; having determined to rest on their arms during the remainder of the night, every man was in readiness for the signal of attack. On the eventful morrow, the dawn commenced with the sun rising in more than usual splendour; its genial rays warmed every soldier's bosom, and they prognosticated a successful contest. The whole of the enemy's camp was now clearly to be perceived about a league distance. The prince then ordered the whole army to move forwards, to gain a more advantageous position. The signal guns, which had been previously settled to give notice of all the columns being ready to

advance, having been fired between three and four o'clock, the march continued; and the picquets of the advanced guard of my column," continued Albert, "were attacked in force, and obliged to give ground; but they soon rallied, and were sustained. We formed in order of battle as fast as we gained the summit of the neighbouring mountain. The enemy, however, already disheartened by the greatness of our force, not having been led to expect half the number, and not acquainted with the combination of the march, had moved in great force out of their entrenchments in the valley, with a view of turning the line upon the right. They were not successful; and therefore countermarched, in order to direct their principal effort to the left of the Italian army.

"About seven o'clock, the action began with a very vigorous attack on those troops; and almost immediately afterwards, our whole army was engaged with the

he enemy, and continued so for four hours without intermission.

"The fortune of the day was yet doubtful to us," added Montauban, "from the superiority of their artillery; and as at that time I was the only officer remaining of our brave regiment, the rest having been either killed or wounded in this desperate action, it was my fate to decide the contest."

"Oh Heavens!" interrupted the countess, in an agony of feeling; "yours, my son? Was it you that stopped the effusion of blood?"

"I am proud to say it was," replied Albert; "for at that moment the air was rent with the cry of—'Our general is taken prisoner — hasten to the assistance of the prince, or the battle's lost to us!' In vain did the officers attempt to calm the consternation of the troops; all was confusion and dismay. To stop the progress of this alarm, although I had then no doubt of its reality, with a thun-

dering voice I exclaimed—'Victory huzza, my comrades—we are crowned with glory!' They caught the sound, and hailing the feint, with enthusiastic rapture again rallied, shouting, as they plunged with heroic ardour into the midst of the enemy's ranks—'Victory! the day is our own!' The action was restored with greater fury than ever; and on my leading the brave Piedmontese to the left of the mountain, which was to the rear of the French army, by this fortunate movement, our noble commander, who, from too great an impetuosity, had got surrounded by a party of French *chasseurs*, was now released, and soon appeared amongst his animated soldiers to close this eventful and dreadful carnage. The enemy gave ground on all sides, and left us completely masters of the field of battle. Before twelve o'clock the hostile foe were flying in all directions, leaving the ground strewed with their dead and wounded. Our own loss," added Montauban, "being so severe,

severe, we could not afford the instantaneous assistance that was requisite for our fallen enemy."

Almeria now clasped her hands, and directing her humid eyes to heaven, exclaimed—"What mother would not be proud of such a son! In you, my Albert, the glory of your father's ancestors rise anew with redoubled lustre. But go on, my boy," said the countess; "my soul, ambitious for your fame, burns to hear every particular—every exploit of your undaunted courage."

"Ah, my mother!" replied the young warrior, "seek to know no more—the remainder is replete with horror. To expatiate on the sufferings of human kind —of men torn from their kindred, every local comfort—to dwell on their piteous cries, their distracting moans for relief, where so little can be afforded to them, is most afflicting. There was, however, one circumstance, during the close of the battle, in the relation of which, my dear

madam, I think you and signora Eleanor will be interested. A French general perceiving the fortune of the day prove adverse to his hopes, rushed from the lines, and challenged me to single combat. We fought. At the first stroke of my sabre he was wounded, yet did he renew the conflict with increased desperation. My horse was shot by one of his soldiers, who was hastening to his rescue. In my fall, I again lifted up my sabre—it pierced the side of the general, who instantly fell on the ground apparently without life.

"The retreat of the French army now becoming general, he found himself totally deserted by those to whom he had a right to look for assistance. For some minutes I gazed on his death-like countenance in silent sorrow. I knelt beside him, and supporting his head on my shoulder, I could perceive he breathed. A heavy sigh succeeded, and he then faintly exclaimed—'Do not disturb me—

me—pray let me die in peace!' I endeavoured to console the officer," continued Montauban, "expressing a hope that the wound was not mortal, and by saying he that should be directly conveyed with great care to my tent, where I would instantly send for a surgeon to attend on him.

'Oh, no!' he replied; 'I wish not for life with the loss of honour.' By this time, however, we were joined by several of our soldiers, and, in compliance with my earnest entreaty, the general suffered us to bear him from the field; which office having performed as gently as possible, holding my handkerchief to the wound to prevent its bleeding afresh, he was conducted to my tent, where I found one of the surgeons in attendance (owing to the report," added Montauban, "that it was myself who had received a fatal stroke from my adversary). I had soon the pleasure of hearing the wound was not deep; and that, with great at-

tention, the general might be restored to health."

Albert paused at this part of the narration. He perceived the countenance of Eleanor changed to a deathly paleness, whilst, with her hand, she endeavoured to chase away the tears which had involuntarily flowed during Montauban's recital of this adventure. The countess, feeling less agitation than her *protegée*, and anxious to hear the conclusion, not observing the effect it had produced on Eleanor, requested her son to resume his narrative.

"The detail of such warlike scenes," replied Albert, addressing his mother, "is too melancholy for the gentle soul of your young friend;" and then turning to the weeping girl, said, with much emotion, thrown entirely off his guard by her apparent grief—"I beseech your pardon—I would not for the world offend you;" and then continued—"Vain, thoughtless

thoughtless Montauban! in extolling your own supposed merit, your words have pierced to the heart an angel!"

These wild sentences of the lover increased the anguish they were meant to subdue. "Oh Eleanor!" he exclaimed, throwing himself at her feet, "no suppliant ever deserved your pity more than Albert de Montauban does at this moment."—"Why will you talk thus?" replied Eleanor, in the greatest agitation. "Your speech alarms me. The sudden close of your narrative assures me the remainder is of dreadful import. My fears have realized the conclusion; and I foretell unceasing anguish will be my portion. Know you not," she continued, that count Anselmo, who took me, a helpless infant, to his care, has affirmed that France is my native land? and although my noble lord has ever cherished me as his daughter (at that word Montauban started), yet has he bade me to revere the place which gave me birth.

Judge, then, if I can hear, unmoved, the miseries of those whom I have been ever taught to hold in reverence? No—it is impossible!" she continued. "With my latest breath I will bless them, and invoke every guardian saint for their felicity."

This severe, but exalted reproof of Eleanor, rendered all further expostulation unavailing. The latter part of the narrative, in particular, had afflicted her; a sudden presentiment having rushed across her mind that the unfortunate French general, whom Montauban had wounded and taken prisoner, might be her own father. From the commencement of her reply to Albert's entreaty, he was certain she entertained that idea, and therefore deeply lamented he should have been so unguarded as to have related it.

Displeasure, however, did not long remain an inmate in the breast of Eleanor. She soon reflected that Montauban had but performed his duty, and in the exercise

exercise of that sacred trust, had acted with humanity and great benevolence. Still there was an indefinable sensation of fear, which, notwithstanding the wish she had to hear the sequel of Albert's narrative, this inward dread seemed to forcibly prevent her having it gratified. Eleanor, therefore, requested permission of the countess to retire; and as she arose from her seat, perceiving the melancholy looks of Montauban, with much gentleness said—"Your country is your debtor, signior; nor must you think the glorious enterprise of relieving Turin, in which you so greatly distinguished yourself, can ever be erased from their remembrance. I have no doubt that many a fair one," she continued, smiling through her tears, "are now employed in weaving the laurel, and other ensignia of honour, to decorate the brow of their preserver." The lover felt not this compliment from his mistress—the manner in which it was spoken offended.

Albert fancied the real meaning intended to be conveyed by it was, that his glory was only to arise from the havock she supposed him to have made, and his triumph from the pleasure of insulting the distresses of a fallen enemy.

How ingenious is the subtle god of love in tormenting his votaries! Immediately, therefore, on Eleanor's leaving the saloon, Montauban intimated to his mother that he should depart from Valleroy the succeeding day, and proceed to Suza, where his regiment was then stationed. The countess, who had now received sufficient proofs of her son's attachment for Eleanor, in a very firm and dignified manner, demanded to know his future intention in respect to her *protegée?* at the same time attempting to convince him, that whatever plans he had perhaps formed for the completion of his wishes, they would be surely frustrated by count Anselmo — that her birth was mysterious, if not dishonourable.

able—" Say not so," hastily interrupted Montauban; " for on her very countenance is marked the stamp of honour. Your suspicions, dearest mother," he continued, " rend my heart in twain. Oh Heavens! can you, for a moment, cherish an idea of Eleanor being the daughter of count Anselmo, when you have just heard from the lips of the lovely girl the declaration of Anselmo, for her to consider France as her native country? Should even this asseveration be false, do you suppose that the count would have introduced to your notice and regard the offspring of an illicit attachment? Impossible!" continued Montauban, with an elevated tone of voice, on perceiving the attention his mother was listening to these arguments in her favour. " Oh, then, let me beseech you to dispel these injurious and tormenting doubts, and be my advocate for pardon to the gentle Eleanor, whose displeasure I have so unhappily incurred!"

The

The countess, although not convinced of the validity of her son's reasoning on a topic in which she knew his heart was so nearly concerned, yet with more calmness, and less assumed authority, she now requested Albert to relate to her the commencement of his acquaintance with the *protegée* of Anselmo. This command was instantly complied with, and with much ingenuousness, except that part referring to the monk Lodovico, to which he thought proper not to allude. On Albert's then renewing his entreaty for his mother's acquiescence with the proposals of marriage he intended to make to Eleanor, she strongly urged the necessity of delaying his suit till the return of the count into Tuscany, Anselmo having alone the power of disposing of the affections of the foundling; and continued—"I shall then feel most happy, my dear Albert, should I obtain that consent, to promote, if possible, your

expectant

expectant felicity with the gentle Eleanor."

"The consent of Anselmo, madam," replied Montauban, mournfully, "I despair of."—"To his will, however, you are, and must be impelled to abide by; for believe me, that Eleanor, (whose love for you I suppose sincere,) even she would not assent to listen to such a declaration, if the permission of her benefactor was not first obtained, whom she holds in reverential awe. Let us not, my son," said Almeria, "anticipate an evil that may not befall us; rather let us cheer the sad heart with this consolatory reflection, that there is no misfortune permitted to happen but some good may be extracted out of it. Oh, Albert, my only surviving comfort! endeavour, then, to expel this destructive melancholy from your breast—rise superior to such a womanish weakness; to effect which, great as my happiness is in beholding, and knowing that you are in safety, yet do I now conjure

conjure you to fly from Valleroy, nor attempt to return until you are assured of my lord's permission. The future peace of a lovely girl depends on it; and——"

—"Say no more, madam, I entreat you," hastily interrupted Montauban; "I am prepared, this moment, to obey your mandate." To this ready compliance of departing from Tuscany, however, the countess did not assent, on reflecting that in his then ill state of health, so soon to renew his journey might be more dangerous than allowing him to sustain, for a period, the society of the fascinating Eleanor. We may justly say, in the words of the poet, Where love reigns, that nought remains; but so

"Redime te captum quam queas minimo."

CHAP. VI.

It is jealousy's peculiar nature
To swell small things to great; nay, out of nought
To conjure much, and then to lose its reason
Amid the hideous phantoms it has form'd.

YOUNG.

WEARILY passed with Albert the first and second week of his abode at Valleroy; his mother was thoughtful, and at times apparently unhappy; and Eleanor, from pleading a slight indisposition, except at the hours of repast, had secluded herself entirely in her own apartments.

Towards the close of the evening before his intended departure, having now been nearly three weeks at the castle, the countess requested Montauban to accompany

pany her to the convent of Santa Maria, having, as she said, some business of consequence to relate to the superior, which must be delivered in person. During their walk, being unattended by any of the servants, Almeria renewed her inquiry respecting the officer whom Albert had wounded at the close of the battle in relieving Turin, for the fate of whom Eleanor had evinced so much uneasiness and inquietude.

"He was our prisoner," said Albert; "but through the clemency of our royal commander, the general was permitted to return to France on his parole."—"His name?"—"Clairvillé," replied Albert to this question of his mother; who continued to inquire if he had any reason to suppose that the general was a relative of Eleanor? With a desponding tone of voice he answered—"I am afraid time will prove it so."

"Afraid!—rather rejoice, my son," reiterated his indulgent mother, "that your

ır supposition may prove true; for
n under a kinder star would your
tunes flourish—the lovely Eleanor,
haps, receive a parent's blessing—the
conquerable doubts, which I entertain
her near affinity to count Anselmo
ipated—and my son be again owned
be rightful heir of Valleroy. Do not
errupt the pleasing ideas I cherish of
rity," said his mother, on perceiving
going to speak. "I am already ac-
inted with the count's displeasure to-
ds you, Albert, and grieve for the
se of it. The unfortunate difference
ween you, however, I despair not of
ng reconciled. He wants not genero-
, when convinced that it will be well
towed. Anselmo, in his relation of
history of the foundling, informed
, that the paper which was tied around
neck, inserting a forcible appeal for
infant's protection, was written in
French language: should it, there-
e, be really proved that the general

of

of whom you have spoken is related to the amiable girl, the humanity you have shewn to your prisoner will be amply rewarded."

"Oh, mother, cease to distress me by such a belief!" he replied. "Can you for an instant suppose, that, should the unfortunate officer, which Heaven avert! be the father of Eleanor, she would unite herself to the wretch who had lifted up his hand against that parent's life?"—"Self-defence is justifiable," answered the countess; "in war it becomes a paramount duty—to shrink from it marks the coward. If we act right, Albert, we must hope always. In your conversation with the general," continued the countess, "had you no opportunity of introducing the name of Anselmo's *protegée*?"—"The mind of Clairvillé was too ill at ease to admit of his discoursing on any subject," replied Albert, "except expressing an anxious desire to be permitted to retire into France. At times he

was

was quite delirious: in those unhappy moments, however, I learnt sufficient to convince me, that if the general be not related to the lovely Eleanor, he is allied to the monk Lodovico."

"A relation of our confessor!" exclaimed Almeria, with the utmost surprise; and continued—"Did Clairvillé reveal so much? He must then be an Italian?"—"I cannot think so—I have too honourable an opinion of him to suppose that he would desert his colours in so unjust a cause," said Montauban; "neither did his sentences accord with that idea you entertain; having denounced, in those dreadful paroxysms, an eternal vengeance on the very name of one. In the utmost fury he exclaimed—'My sword shall never rest till the wrongs of Hypolitus are revenged!' An awful silence for a few moments then succeeded, during which Clairvillé became more composed. I approached him—he knew me not; the general incoherently uttered—

'Hold!

"'Hold! no more! already I feel your dagger at my heart—destruction follows the rash attempt;' and then, in a milder tone of supplication, he continued—'Oh my brother! again let us be united in everlasting bonds of amity—accede to my entreaty.' A long pause now ensued," said Albert, "which was broken only by the deep moans of the afflicted officer, who, to his bodily pain, was likewise apparently suffering the greater misery of mental agony. Some time having elapsed in this silent sorrow, he concluded by pronouncing, with marked emphasis and poignant grief, the name of Eleanor and Lodovico."

"Strange! very strange indeed!" replied the countess to this latter information of Montauban's; "and impossible for either of us to unravel so mysterious a conclusion!" So deeply were they engaged in this interesting subject, that they had now arrived at the gates of the monastery, without either being in the least

least conscious of the termination of their walk. The tolling, however, of the convent bell for vespers, recalled Albert to his recollection; with a heavy sigh he mentally ejaculated, "It was at this very hour that I first saw the beauteous Eleanor—first knew the pangs of love—became wounded with the shafts so bright; I sunk insensibly its devoted victim."

Prayers having begun at the convent, the countess could not obtain an interview with the abbess that night—"How unfortunate!" exclaimed Almeria; "you should have reminded me, Montauban, of the lapse of time: indeed you are a sorry companion; I will not request your attendance again if you are so thoughtless." Albert smiled at this reproof of his mother, but was silent; the delay having arisen from her curiosity in hearing the account of general de Clairvillé, which her son would have been better pleased to have remained concealed.

The

The countess having now left a message with the portress, that she should wait again on the superior the succeeding morning, she returned with her son to Valleroy; and on entering the saloon, complaining of being fatigued with her walk, instantly retired to her own apartment.

On being left alone, the pleasant moonlight induced Albert to renew his walk through the domains of the castle. He wandered about for several hours, and enjoyed an indescribable pleasure in being permitted to sigh at liberty, and indulge reflection on the past—the uncertainty of the future; to trace, in thought, the happy scenes of childhood—the misery of man on arriving at maturity, when too oft unbounded passions take the lead, and reason, light of the soul, is contemned and disregarded. This melancholy cast of thought, however, was not without its use; it calmed, for a while, the spirits of the impetuous youth:

youth; the natural dignity of his mind became, in some degree, restored; and on determining to uphold it, he solemnly swore to fly from the enchantment which had so fatally inthralled him; and prayed that in active life he might so pass his days as to quite forget the world had ever contained an Eleanor. Such a resolution was truly magnanimous, and bespoke the hero.

The scene around conspired, too, in assisting this present state of his mind; the frowning grandeur of the lofty turrets of the castle, which seemed, as borne by the gale of evening, to whisper, "These mutilated walls have often signalized themselves with glory; here, on these battlements, has many a warrior hurled destruction on a besieging foe, and taught to thousands what the human mind is capable, possessed of heroic virtue, unshackled by female chains."

Montauban appeared to tread on air, his soul uplifted by the solemnity of the

hour. Night having now spread her shadowing mantle o'er the heavens, the pale moon, shedding a soft and silvery radiance, alone assisted to guide the wanderer through this sweet Arcadia, whose crystal currents, and enamelled banks of roses, with other odoriferous flowers, flung their fragrant perfumes along the gentle breeze, and aided to throw an enchantment over every surrounding object.

His bosom glowed with gratitude as he contemplated the wondrous beauty of Divine Providence; and as the melancholy idea rose in his mind, that here he should never more behold them, he exclaimed aloud—"Farewell, ye blissful scenes—farewell to Valleroy!" and continued, in softer accents of sorrow at the reflection, "Oh Eleanor, little did Montauban think, when he first loved you, you would have taught his heart to feel such pangs!"

An illusive ray of light now terminated the

the sad complaints of the lover. In passing along the grove, on the eastern side of the castle, Albert saw the form of Eleanor gliding through the trees which fronted the temple: swift as lightning he pursued the sylph-like enchantress; and on drawing nearer, he observed a letter in her hand; she was pressing it with eagerness to her bosom, whilst reciting in a low tone of voice, as she continued her way to the castle, the following lines to friendship:

" In questa mia solitudino, dove sola prova paie 'l mio cor. Io rammento? Contento passato ed i dolci paiceri dell amicisia. Quest alma reconoscenti godera sempre della felicitá 'dell' amico, penera per le sua sciagure porgendo, sempre vote per la sua salute, ed ogni prosperita. Ahime! guardo splendera di nuova quest' astro benigna, sovra i giorni miu."

A deadly faintness now benumbed every faculty of Montauban. Eleanor, with the utmost transport, kissed the letter from which she had been repeating,

and then folding it up with great care, and concealing it beneath her robe, again uttered aloud—"*Felice notte, mia caro amico !*"

Jealousy had now taken full possession in the breast of Montauban, accompanied with a determination of revenging the supposed inconstancy of Eleanor, although it was but an instant before he had so nobly resolved to drive her from his remembrance, and regain his liberty. In furious haste, therefore, he passed her, and no longer able to command the natural warmth of his temper, exclaimed to himself, "Distraction ! I cannot endure such accumulated insults!" and continued, with greater vehemence —"My brain's on fire ! yet shall my sufferings be participated !"

If the first exclamation did not alarm the gentle Eleanor, the latter sentence of Albert prevented her from all power of reply. Terrified also at his menacing gesture, as he darted along the avenue

to

to regain the castle, she could not immediately recover presence of mind, nor courage sufficient, to encounter any explanation with the impetuous Montauban. Surprised and affected at such behaviour, (well knowing that his angry declamation alluded to her,) as soon as she thought she saw Albert enter the castle, Eleanor again bent her way towards the temple; and on seating herself under the portico, she again took the fated letter from her bosom which had so inflamed the imagination of her lover, and pressing it to her lips, burst into a flood of tears.

In the mean while, Montauban was a silent spectator of this second interesting, yet to him, agonizing scene, he not having entered the castle, as she supposed, but on observing her intention, had returned, and followed her unperceived to the temple. In an agony of desperation he now appeared before her, and instantly snatching the letter from

her hand, he tore it to atoms; and exclaimed—"Thus, madam, would I serve the author of it; and know that Albert de Montauban will not rest till he has had ample vengeance on the villain who has so basely annihilated all his future hopes of happiness."

Eleanor heard not, however, the conclusion of this dreadful imprecation; her feelings were so overcome by this violent proceeding of Albert, that she fell senseless at his feet. At that moment a groan proceeded from the interior of the temple, followed by another yet more appalling to the ear of Montauban, whose passion had now become somewhat calmer, on observing the effects of his impetuosity. Tremblingly he raised the fainting Eleanor from the ground—he supported her in his arms—but could not speak. This third convincing proof of an affection for the writer of the letter he had destroyed, made him look on her with marked dislike. In silent indifference,

ference, and even impatience to be released from his burthen, Albert then awaited her return to reason.

A short interval had elapsed of this unpleasant rencounter of the lovers, when the sound of voices not far off, and evidently approaching towards them, recalled the bewildered senses of the lovely orphan, who now shrunk with terror from her unkind supporter, and leaning against an adjoining column, it appeared to Montauban that she was desirous of being left alone; he therefore said—"I am well convinced, madam, my presence is disagreeable to you; I can however assure you this is the last time—" Before he could finish the severe sentence of taking leave of her for ever, and denounce further vengeance on his supposed rival, Ernestine Rodolphus, the countess, attended by Lauretta, made her appearance.

Montauban, having no satisfactory reasons for being seen with Eleanor at such an hour of the evening, and so distant

from the castle, bowed, therefore, respectfully to his mother; and without speaking a word, instantly disappeared amidst the windings of an adjacent shrubbery.

Displeased at such behaviour, the countess now advanced to the amiable girl, and taking her trembling hand, requested from her an explanation of this singular meeting, when she supposed that she had retired to rest for several hours. Poor Eleanor could not utter a single sentence; her audible sighs, and face covered with tears, was all the information she could derive that something was wrong; some unhappiness, which appeared to prey with great anguish upon her heart, and prevented the power of reply.

"Well, my love," said the humane Almeria, unwilling to probe the wound she could not heal, "return with me to the castle, and endeavour, by sleep, only friend of the miserable, to chase away the sorrow which oppresses you. I am

not

not altogether ignorant of the cause of it," continued the countess, "therefore if you act ingenuously with me, and in your actions are but guided by reason, depend on it, you shall ever find in me an affectionate and faithful adviser." These tender assurances of friendship affected Eleanor more deeply than the reproaches she had listened to from the proud and impetuous Albert, who had, in one moment of anger, as she supposed, torn her from his heart for ever. Silently, therefore, as she followed her benefactress to the castle, she mentally ejaculated—"Oh Montauban! did you but inherit one spark of your mother's virtue, I should not, as now, have to lament my easy credulity!" A sudden project then pressed on her imagination, and forgetful of her friend being so near, she exclaimed aloud—"I am resolved, and no power on earth shall prevent the execution of it!"

"Are your resolutions so firm, Elea-

nor?" inquired the countess, smiling at the warmth with which she had expressed herself. "Ah, my dear girl," she continued, "when you have seen as much of the world as I have done, and have been more experienced in its unavoidable calamities, the present disappointment, and the unpleasantries you may hitherto casually have suffered, will appear light in comparison to those of your maturer years; those lines of the immortal Homer, in his Iliad, where he says—

'To labour is the lot of man below,
And when Jove gave us life, he gave us woe,'

has been fully illustrated by the history of succeeding ages; the traditions which have been handed down to posterity of the greatest and best of men having suffered the most oppressive cruelty; yet did they bear their misfortunes with patience and moderation; secure in the approbation of their own hearts, they bid defiance

defiance to all of human kind, and died as they lived—full of piety, nobly great, an everlasting honour to themselves and their country."

This kind of consolation, the deriving comfort to ourselves from the knowledge of the greater sufferings of others, had ever failed, however, on the commiserating disposition of Eleanor; she had oftener wept more for the sorrows of others than her own; which, as the countess justly observed, had as yet, however, been trifling, in comparison to what she would most probably endure on a further acquaintance with the world, in which, for some unknown cause, the most deserving characters are not always those on whom the sunshine of fortune is destined to visit.

They having now entered the hall of the castle, Lauretta terminated the eloquence of her mistress by rapturously crying out with joy, "Thanks to the Holy Virgin, we are all safe at home again!

The very thought of that horrid temple so terrifies me, that I do humbly pray, my lady, you will never take me any more spirit-hunting; for——" A look of displeasure from the countess now silenced her loquacious attendant; and on observing Lupino, who was at a distant part of the hall, busily employed in packing up his master's trunk, Almeria sent her to inquire the reason of this hasty preparation for her son's departure? Lupino informed them it was his master's intention to leave Valleroy at a very early hour in the morning. "Where is your master?" inquired the countess, on hearing this sudden determination of Montauban. To the reply of Lupino that he was retired to rest, she continued—"Then inform him that we cannot dispense with his company until after to-morrow. It is my Albert's birthday, Lupino; and I propose to commemorate it by giving a little fête to the neighbouring peasantry; therefore he must stay to witness their festivity."

estivity." This information afforded much pleasure to Lupino and Lauretta; he latter instantly departed to reveal his welcome intelligence to the rest of he servants, and Lupino to acquaint his naster. Eleanor and the countess waited n the saloon for an answer to the mes-age. Almeria, however, observing the pallid looks of her young friend, and her extreme agitation, rang for lights, and lismissed her by saying—"Come, come, ny love, retire to repose; for I must have all your charms summoned up to-morrow to grace the rural banquet of the villagers, by whom you know you are held in great veneration."

The dejected Eleanor, attended by Lauretta, then repaired to her own chamber, the latter not a little exhilirated at the thoughts of having escaped the meditated midnight ramble with her mistress, whose intention it was that night to have explored the mystery of the temple,

temple, and developed, at once, the cause which had inspired such terror amongst the domestics.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

"The world has now no joys for me,
Nor can life now one pleasure boast,
Since all my eyes desir'd to see—
My wish, my hope, my all, is lost.
——————Ye Powers divine,
What have I done, or thought, or said?
Oh say, what horrid act of mine,
Has drawn this vengeance on my head?"

"If night, as we are taught to believe, brings peace to the weary inhabitant of a cottage, how much more is their state to be envied than mine!" ejaculated Eleanor, as she vainly sought in sleep to obliterate, for a time, the unhappiness which oppressed her. Lauretta, observing the anguish

anguish of Eleanor, endeavoured to divert and recall her mind from the object which had renewed, with such increasing gloom, the melancholy tenor of her natural disposition, by a continued relation of Antonio, whose history Lauretta had been prevented concluding on a former night.

"I think, my lady," said this artless girl, as she seated herself by the couch of Eleanor, "I left off my brother's history just at that part where he fell in love with Corisande, the merchant's daughter. It is a grievous tale, and has been a warning to every body—I mean, all my fellow-servants that I have informed of it—how to escape so unaccountable a malady. The doctor used to say, when he attended Antonio, that it was learning began to turn his wits, and love made him downright mad. My brother sometimes fancied himself transported, as he used to say, into the Torrid Zone, and would call upon the Tropical

pical Cancer to allay the flame which, he said, was consuming his vitals. At other times," continued Lauretta, "he would sob, and sigh, and pine himself to death; then again would Antonio start up from his seat, and cry aloud for Corisande; and on being quite worked up to frenzy at the mention of her name, he would exclaim, with fury—'Self-destruction is alone the remedy!' which used to frighten us all most terribly, my lady."

"Poor young man!" ejaculated the still-weeping Eleanor; and continued—"Was your brother at home then, Lauretta?"—"Oh yes, my lady; because on the marriage of the merchant's daughter with the rich banker at Paris, Antonio was so outrageous, that his master was obliged to send him away as quick as possible. Well, then, my lady," continued the talkative girl, "as I was saying before, my poor brother would determine on killing himself downright; and once, to complete, as he thought, his sacrilegious intention,

intention, Antonio mounted an old wooden chair, exclaiming, 'Oh Sappho! immortal fair! thy destiny be mine!' when immediately he jumped down, and laid on the ground as if he was quite dead. My mother was then sadly alarmed, and cried bitterly over him for some time; fortunately, however, the doctor came to visit him, and the moment Antonio heard his voice, (which was not one of the pleasantest in the world, that I must say,) he got up again, and began to sing the following little English ballad, applying it to his own situation, and which Antonio has since taught me to repeat in that tongue —Shall I give you the words of it, my lady?"

Eleanor having some slight knowledge of the language, an assent was given to this request, and Lauretta thus began—

"Distracted with care,
For Corisande the fair,
Poor Antonio, her lover,
Resolves, in despair,

No

No longer to languish,
Nor bear so much anguish;
But mad with his love,
To a precipice goes,
Where a leap from above
Would soon finish his woes.

When in rage he came there,
Beholding how steep
The sides did appear,
And the bottom how deep,
His torments projecting,
And sadly reflecting,
That a lover forsaken
A new lover may get,
But a neck, when once broken,
Can never be set:

And that he could die
Whenever he would;
But that he could live
But as long as he could:
How grievous soever
The torment might grow,
He scorn'd to endeavour
To finish it so;

But bold, unconcern'd,
At thoughts of the pain,
He calmly return'd
To his cottage again."

A faint smile appeared on the countenance of Eleanor at this ludicrous description of the tender passion of love, so humourously related by her attendant, yet being at the same time weary of it, she said—"Indeed, Lauretta, I must request you to hasten to the conclusion of your story, for sleep weighs heavy on my eyelids, and oppresses my senses; therefore be quick, as I wish to indulge it."

"Well, then, my lady," she replied, "soon after that, my brother got well again; and being tired of home, he returned to Paris, and entered into the service of a gentleman, who employed him to write speeches and panegyrics on the great lords of the state, who had not inclination or abilities to do it for themselves. Antonio, however, was very shortly

ortly weary of that occupation, which, ›wever profitable, did not acquire him y fame: so therefore, as he used to y, he turned a living author instead 'a dead one, having his name inscribed large capitals on the front of every le-page; and a fine piece of work he ade of it: he wrote for booksellers, 10, to be sure, were obliging enough print his works, but too polite to pay r them. Fame was his reward; and ıtonio found, to his sorrow, that an ıpty pocket was the consequence of

To repair that he was then advised libel the great folks — foolish fellow! t to know that that was like a mole-l in contest with a mountain, which is re to fall to the ground. He got, how-er, a maintenance by it, for they in-ıntly put him in prison, from which ey will take good care he never gets it, I dare say."

Thus ended Lauretta's account of her unfortunate

unfortunate brother, who, had he possessed less of talent, and a greater share of prudence, might have been an honour to himself, and have rendered efficient services to the declining years of his aged parents; instead of which, through a false idea of ambition, and want of foresight, he had, perhaps, to end his days within the gloomy walls of a prison.

To a question of Lauretta to her mistress, whether she did not think it a very sorrowful story? Eleanor returned for answer — "Sorrowful indeed! for Heaven knows I yet dearly love him!" Lauretta, not understanding exactly what she meant by such an apostrophe, repeated her question. To this, however, her mistress was silent; and on Lauretta's going nearer to the couch of Eleanor, she found her in a sound sleep, which accounted for the incoherent manner she had replied to her respecting the fate of Antonio. Lauretta, therefore, having

ing no longer an attentive hearer to her loquacity, she carefully closed the curtains, and then softly left the apartment.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

The busy husbandman has turn'd the soil
With his bent ploughshare: hence his annual toil;
His country, children, profit by his pains;
Hence he his herds and useful steers maintains.
No pause he knows; or teems the bounteous year
With fruits, or cattle, or the bearded ear;
The plenteous produce loads the furrow'd land;
The granaries burst; cold winter is at hand;
The pounding press now Sicyon's berries feel;
Glad to their sties the swine, full-acorn'd, reel.
The woods give arbutes; autumn-fruits abound,
And mild grapes ripen on high sunny ground.
Their father's neck the fondling train embrace;
And Virtue's self protects the blameless race.

VIRGIL.

THE following morning was the anniversary of the birth of Albert de Montauban.

ban. The countess Anselmo having, on the preceding day, signified her intention of giving a little fête to the villagers contiguous to the domains of Valleroy, at the approach of dawn, therefore, a cheerful and even joyous scene presented itself. It was the close of the vintage, and on that day the hardy peasantry had finished their annual labour. They assembled early, and with their pipe and tabor hailed their yet drowsy inhabitants of the castle with their lively strains, and as a particular mark of respect, likewise, for the gallant soldier. A resplendent and all-cheering sun now broke through the long casements of painted glass, which illuminated the chamber of Albert; he awoke from his disturbed sleep, unrefreshed by it, and unhappy. Respect for his mother, however unwillingly, had detained him for this day at the castle. He arose, and having dressed himself with more than ordinary care in the habiliments of his profession, he determined, as he should so

soon leave Valleroy, once more t
visit the mysterious temple. As he
ceeded towards it, and on passing
the windows of the apartment of
nor, he involuntarily stopped; a lo
mournful tone of voice was disti
heard to come from thence, accomp
by a lute; he listened, and pres
heard that Eleanor was the syren;
that she was repeating the words
stanza of which he was the a
Some degree of satisfaction was co
nicated to the mind of Albert b
seeming preference given to his co
sition, which, however trifling it
be, and uninteresting, perhaps, to a
partial judge, was yet held in hig
mation, and before all others pre
in the opinion of our lovely orpha
though harsh and ungracious had
Albert's treatment towards Eleano
she could not for one instant chas
from her remembrance—it whis
to her she was once blest with his r

the agonizing thought that she now was parted from him for ever struck her so forcibly, that tears continually interrupted her from proceeding with the melancholy strain. Montauban heard her deep-drawn sighs—her stifled sobs; but jealousy raged in his breast with such obduracy, that it completely stifled every sentiment of pity for the unhappy object.

Proceeding on his way to the temple, he once looked back at the castle, and to the apartment of Eleanor; but on perceiving her standing near the window, he fled with as much precipitation as if he had seen a basilisk.

"Tormenting love! thou bane of every joy,
Whose pains or sweets alike our peace destroy;
Still equal woes from thee mankind endure,
Fatal thy wound, and fatal is thy cure."

On arriving at the temple, Montauban observed with surprise that the part of the wall which had given way, on his in-

specting the edifice, was now rebuilding; and perceiving the workmen busily employed in the undertaking, he inquired by whose orders it was? They replied "The confessor Lodovico;" which fully confirmed the suspicions he before entertained. Defeated in his purpose, therefore, Albert returned to the castle; and on entering the saloon, he received a congratuatlory compliment (having now entered his twenty-first year,) from his mother and Eleanor, who were already seated at the breakfast-table. The charms of the latter never appeared to more advantage; her garb was simple, but becoming; the small wreaths of flowers which decorated her head, and were tastefully arranged around the dress, were perfectly Arcadian, and suited to the occasion; the air of softened melancholy which was diffused over her countenance gave an additional and finishing grace to the whole form; and had not the mind of Montauban been so unfortunately

tunately prejudiced against her, such a combination of loveliness must have greatly operated in her favour. During the repast, neither Albert or Eleanor exchanged a single sentence.—The pride of both these young people were deeply wounded. With that impression on their minds, therefore, which were too keenly sensible for their peace, in such a world as this, where the principle of "to bear and forbear" is so strongly requisite to attain even a moderate share of happiness, no reconciliation was likely to be effected, under the present delusion which mutually actuated their conduct.

The countess, perceiving their mutual embarrassment, proposed a walk; and as Montauban acquiesced in it, she desired Eleanor to put on her veil and to accompany them. However desirous the lovely girl might be of retiring from the society of the youth, whose behaviour

towards her had been so ungentle, indeed we may say severe, still it could not prevent that uniform propriety of behaviour which was inherent in her—she accepted the offer.

On the lawn were now assembled various groups of the peasantry, to partake of the bounty so generously awarded them by the fair hostess of the castle of Valleroy. Round the tables, which were sheltered from the meridian heat by an overhanging grove of citron, and were plentifully supplied with viands and the most delicious fruits, sat many a joyous face, in radiant colours of fancy recounting their exploits—their deeds of arms—or the more beneficial effects of industry: whilst among the younger part of the community, their favourite village maid, the beauteous Florisee, queen of their little festival, and whose services we have before had occasion to mention in this history, was busily employed in distributing chaplets of flowers among the

the young men and maidens, who were to join with her in the festive dance. The minstrels, with lively strains, now struck up, to arrange in order these votaries of Terpsichore. The air was in an instant filled with harmony; and mirth, with innocence, revelled in the domains of Valleroy.

The countess Anselmo, Albert, and Eleanor, on approaching the sylvan scene of their gaiety, were severally complimented on the happy occasion. They were then led to a rustic alcove at the extremity of the lawn, entwined with eglantine and myrtle, and canopied with ripened clusters of grapes, and the tender ringlets of the vine; whilst choicest flowers and shrubs wafted ambrosial fragrance to all around. On their being seated, Florisee, attended by a young shepherd, approached the countess, and kneeling, presented to her a wreath of laurel, with the following lines in honour of Albert de Montauban :—

"These antique tow'rs*, in massy state,
In our young champion's mind shall raise
Vast images of Italia's elder days.
Albert, the bold pattern of his patriot sire,
Shall fill with early fame's immortal fire.
————Yet, oh warrior youth!
May no dazzling ray
Of specious fame thy stedfast feet betray!
Be thine domestic glory's radiant calm!
Be thine the sceptre wreath'd with many a palm!
Be thine the throne with peaceful emblems hung!
The silver lyre to milder conquest strung."

This little tribute of respect was gratefully received by the countess, who, on having read it, with a significant smile presented it to her son. Montauban instantly recognized, that, although much disguised, the handwriting was Eleanor's; yet her conduct had been so mysterious of late, and her behaviour so distant towards him, that this circumstance created not the least pleasure. For the first time, however, since their unfortunate ren-

* Valleroy.

counter

counter at the temple, he now addressed her by saying—"You, madam, will feel no satisfaction in perusing this complimentary effusion, when the object is not deserving of it; and I have no doubt you will think with me, that it should be consigned for ever to oblivion." Eleanor was provokingly silent; Albert therefore tore it in pieces, and then turning to the astonished and disappointed Florisee, said haughtily—"You must be more circumspect for the future, and not praise any one except your lover—it will make him jealous."—"Ah, my lord, but indeed you are mistaken," replied the artless girl; "for true love is never jealous—at least so my lady Eleanor told me, and I would take her opinion before all the world." After which she immediately tripped away to join the dancers. However this conversation might have been amusing to Montauban, it was exceedingly distressing to Eleanor, who, although her face was covered with a

veil, the traces of tears were visibly to be seen; and on the countess's perceiving how really unpleasant to Eleanor was the irony of her lover, she said to him—"Come, my son, this is but sorry pastime for my young charge; I request, therefore, you will lead her out to dance: such condescension of you both will gratify our numerous visitants, and likewise help to enliven the drooping spirits of my lovely girl." Albert bowed acquiescence to this proposal, and then muttered a few high-flown compliments to Eleanor, of the honour she would afford him by her assent to his mother's proposition. In the true spirit of coquetry, Eleanor now had a favourable opportunity of returning his own thoughts on that subject—"Flattery, my lord, is displeasing at all times, more particularly so when it proceeds from those whose unfavourable opinion is but too well known to the object of it. The honour you propose to me I must beg leave to decline,

it

it not being an amusement I am partial to; and should I alter my present determination, I am already engaged."

The countess could not but express her surprise at the spirit with which Eleanor had answered her son, and yet more at the mysterious conclusion. She felt much displeasure on account of it; and to conceal it, rose from her seat, and walked towards the dancers. Montauban supposed this a convincing proof, if any more was needed to what he thought he had before discovered, of Eleanor's inconstancy. His pride was invincible; yet the painful idea that this was the last time he should ever hear the sound of that once-beloved voice—of beholding that engaging and sylph-like form, which had at first rivetted his attention, and since, from the angelic gracefulness of her manners, and superior style of beauty, had challenged his admiration and ardent affection, his feelings became too powerful for utterance—he would have

spoken, but could not. With unutterable anguish, therefore, he fixed his eyes stedfastly on her face, which seemed to say—Read in them, Eleanor, the agony I suffer at thus bidding you farewell for ever. All the pride—the resentment she had felt at this unkind behaviour, vanished in an instant on beholding him thus affected. With a more composed countenance, therefore, which softened by degrees into a bewitching tenderness, Eleanor expressed her regret at having thoughtlessly offended him; and was apparently inclined to retract her former determination, had not the sudden appearance of Ernestine Rodolphus completely annihilated that idea. Deeply did she now regret that her innocent raillery should have terminated so seriously. Surprise at this unexpected visit of Rodolphus, and disappointment on being prevented effecting a reconciliation with her lover, so extremely agitated Eleanor, that all power of speech was denied her;

whilst

whilst Montauban, in a distraction of mind not easily to be imagined, at this supposed detection of his rival, struck his hand against his forehead, and exclaimed—"Fool that I am, to have been so long the sport of such an ingrate!"

With difficulty it was that the trembling Eleanor, who, dreading his impetuosity of temper, had remained silent during these violent expressions of his anger, could regain her seat. Rodolphus approached the terrified girl, and in the soft voice of pity endeavoured to calm her fears, by saying that the object of her alarm had departed, and that she was now in safety.

"Gone! Montauban gone?" she replied, with the utmost emotion; and then, on hearing these words in answer —"Yes, and where, if he gives you so much uneasiness, I sincerely hope he will not be easily found again," all her resolution entirely forsook her—the full heart gave vent to her feelings—she

wept

wept bitterly; and unheedful of her companion, with anguish lamented the cause of it. Rodolphus, therefore, patiently waited till he observed Eleanor more composed, before he would state the object of his mission; he then said, with much gravity—"Will you permit me, madam, to explain the reason of my present, I fear you think unfortunate visit to Valleroy?" A slight assent being given to that question, he continued—"I am commissioned by my mother, she having the full consent of count Anselmo, to request the honour of your company for a few weeks at the castle of Oldenzo. My father is on his way to join the count at Turin; and as the letter I have just now delivered to the countess expresses, I believe, a wish from her husband for her likewise to join him in Piedmont, I trust my embassy to signora Eleanor will be successful."

This was a new stroke of affliction. Every circumstance of late appeared to increase

increase the misunderstanding which existed between the lovers. In a very collected manner, added to much dignity, Eleanor returned her acknowledgments to Ernestine for the invitation from madame Rodolphus; at the same time, however, she said, with tearful eyes—"Although, during the absence of my benefactors, I should prefer retiring to the sanctuary of Santa Maria, yet if it is contrary to their wishes, and I can be of the least service in softening the regret madame Rodolphus may feel from the loss of the society of her husband, I shall with pleasure accede to the intended honour."

Ernestine, delighted at her conceding to his entreaty, with rapturous gaiety proposed immediately obtaining the consent of the countess Anselmo, who, he said, had, on the receipt of the letter, returned to the castle—"Shall I, therefore," he continued, "have the felicity, signora, of conducting you to her to complete my happiness?" This proposition, however,

ever, of the young Rodolphus, Eleanor declined accepting; it would appear, she thought, as an aggravated insult and cruelty to poor Montauban, whom, notwithstanding all his frailties, she yet so tenderly loved and respected. Ernestine, therefore, was obliged to depart alone. Eleanor then bent her way to the dancers to summon Florisee to attend her to the castle, that she might privately relate this new and unfortunate occurrence, which was to tear her away from the beloved scenes of her youthful days—from all those friends she so fondly revered—the sisterhood of Santa Maria; and, as she melancholy concluded—"To be cast, Florisee, among strangers, to whose manners and customs I am totally ignorant—whose society cannot, for one moment, impart a ray of consolation for the loss of those I leave behind. Unfortunate Eleanor!" she continued to exclaim, "what will become of thee!"

Florisee,

Florisee, much affected at the thoughts of losing her young mistress, (as she used to call her,) in a most urgent manner entreated to be an attendant on her dear signora to the castle of Oldenzo. "I fear," replied Eleanor, "that will not be practicable, without I could be able to obtain the permission of madame Rodolphus; and that I almost despair of, from the knowledge of her general character, which is reported to be imperious and haughty in the extreme; particularly as she knows that I am but a sorry dependant myself on the bounty of my lord Anselmo."

By this time they had arrived at the portico at the western entrance of the castle. Eleanor then promised the young shepherdess that she might depend on her friendship, and that if she could not have her to accompany her to Oldenzo, she should write, by every opportunity, to her dear sister Cecilia, (one of the nuns belonging to the convent of Santa Maria,) and

and by that means Florisee would constantly hear of her welfare.

The poor girl sighed deeply, and sorrowfully exclaimed, "Ah, my dear lady! who would have thought so pleasant a morning should have turned out so gloomy a day!" Eleanor, not instantly understanding her allusion, she went on to explain—"I mean, signora, that we were all so happy a few hours since; and now, through that disagreeable signior, Ernestine Rodolphus, coming here, we are all so very miserable; for there's you, my lady, I, the countess, and our dear signior Albert de Montauban, all of us in the same unhappy condition; for I saw him running almost out of his wits towards the castle; and one of the villagers says that he saw our young lord mount his horse, and that, followed by Lupino, they rode away like lightning, and were out of sight in a flash."

Roberto, the old steward, now came to summon Eleanor to the countess Anselmo,

mo, who, he said, had expressed a wish to see her in the saloon. Eleanor could not, therefore, now make any inquiry of Florisee respecting the road Montauban had taken, nor devise any means to stop the progress of her lover, to effect a reconciliation before she departed from Valleroy. She instantly obeyed the commands of the countess, and Florisee sorrowfully retired to impart the melancholy intelligence she had received to her companions.

It was with difficulty that Eleanor could gain sufficient courage to appear before the countess after the late unhappy differences between her and Montauban; she expected a very serious remonstrance from his mother, on account of it. As she drew near the saloon, this agitation increased, on hearing expressions of apparent distress from the countess, and the voice of Ernestine Rodolphus seemingly endeavouring to calm the grief of the amiable Almeria.

"Ah

"Ah me!" ejaculated Eleanor, "I, dear lady, that am the cause of unhappiness. Surely I am doomed the sport of fortune, and to mal around me as miserable as myself!" would she now have retreated, and i litude mourned her helpless fate; y again bringing to mind that it wa express command of the countess A mo to see her immediately, poor nor, having now gained the door o saloon, knocked softly to obtain a tance. She waited for some mi and no answer being returned, sh peated it. No permission having, ever, been given for her to ente apartment, Eleanor sat down in the bule, supposing the countess wa much engaged at present to admi Her fears became more and more a ing, on hearing shortly that the con Lodovico was likewise in the saloon although she could not distinguish th ject of discourse, it appeared, by the

in which he spoke, that he materially differed in opinion with Rodolphus.

Eleanor's anxiety became excessive, rightly judging that some greater calamity must have happened to the countess than the abrupt departure of Montauban, who would have been obliged, if not then, to have left Valleroy on the succeeding day.

A dead silence now reigned, and shortly afterwards Lauretta came out of the saloon in great haste, and was proceeding across the hall to the steward's room. Eleanor followed, and requested her to stop, as she wished to speak with her. Lauretta looking back, and observing Eleanor, exclaimed — "Oh, my poor mistress!" and without reply, continued her way to the chamber of old Roberto. Eleanor, however, determined no longer to endure this painful suspense; the door of the saloon was now open, and without any more hesitation she entered it.

The

The scene that was presented to her sight required much greater resolution than usually belongs to a female heart, to support with firmness the shock her feelings sustained. On a couch, at the farther end of the saloon, was laid the apparent lifeless form of Almeria. Four men habited in black, with drawn sabres, and of the most terrific appearance, stood near the couch, maliciously smiling at the tender offices of the young Rodolphus, who was endeavouring to apply a restorative cordial to the lips of the countess, but of which she could not partake. Close to the unfortunate sufferer was seated the monk Lodovico, his face hid in his cowl, trembling with affright, and seemingly convulsed with grief. Eleanor wisely reflecting on the increased misery, if possible, that might be occasioned by any sudden emotion of alarm at such a spectacle, she forbore to utter a single sentence; but with hands clenched, and eyes uplifted to heaven, she appeared to the surrounding

urrounding attendants as a statue struck ith horror. Rodolphus now rose from is humble posture, to bring the afflicted naid to the countess Anselmo, whose pirit, he thought, had already fled to the nansions of the blessed, and to take with im a last look of her saint-like form. A erfect serenity was spread over every eature—a sweet smile yet played on her lips—the faint blush of innocence mantled on her cheek, and told, with never-failing truth, that all was harmony within.

Eleanor was passively led by Rodolphus to the couch, on which was laid the lovely Almeria; but no longer able to support her attempt at fortitude, from the shock her feelings had before sustained, she fainted in the arms of her supporter.

A length of time elapsed ere Eleanor thoroughly recovered her senses; and when she did, it was to be apprized that she was no longer an inhabitant of Valleroy,

leroy, but instead of it, to find herself immured in the castle of Oldenzo. From such a melancholy transition, and the circumstances that led to it, it was with difficulty that she could believe it to be reality, or if so, not executed by mortal hand.

The dawn of day just appearing, in an agitation scarcely to be conceived, Eleanor arose from her bed, and minutely examined the long suite of apartments which led from her chamber, without as yet being convinced that she was an inmate of Oldenzo. A gloomy and death-like silence pervaded this part of the antique mansion. Impanelled oak, and gigantic statues of ebony, were placed in niches along the rooms. The furniture, though faded, bore evident marks of former grandeur, the chairs, the sofas, and the tables, being covered with black velvet, embossed with gold. Grandoles, of the most magnificent structure, were suspended from the vaulted roofs;

the

the windows of painted glass reflecting on them the various colours of the prism, and formed a resplendent lustre. The shriek-owl, however, seemed now to be its only inhabitant; it was nested in some of the drapery of the curtains, and by its terrific cries greatly alarmed the timid Eleanor, until she observed the nightly visitor fly from its hiding-place, and through one of the windows, which was broken, make its way to a large cypress-tree, whose branches nearly overhung this part of the fabric. Through its intermediate spaces were to be seen the lofty Apennines, and a distant view of the Mediterranean, with a passing sail now and then brightening in the horizon, scudding over the world of waters to their destined ports, and perhaps joyful homes. "Alas!" ejaculated the unhappy orphan, on reflecting of the sad vicissitudes of her own life, "I scarcely know the name of so blessed a resort as home; no parent, no kindred of mine,

will ever cheer me with their presence; nor will the smile of welcome, or voice of real affection, ever reach my ear, to calm the sorrows of my heart."

The uncertainty as to the fate of the unfortunate countess Anselmo now rushed again on her memory, and bedewed her face with tears. To have lost the counsel of so affectionate an adviser as the mother of Montauban, for whom, notwithstanding his unkind behaviour towards her, she still felt the tenderest regard, was therefore a subject of real sorrow; and the not being able to obtain the least intelligence respecting them, or in what manner she had been placed in this strange abode, increased her affliction; for as yet, to her idea, she had seen no one since the dreadful scene presented to her sight at Valleroy. A combination of distresses appeared now to surround Eleanor; the mysterious flight of the only benefactor she had ever known—count Anselmo; the supposed death

death of Almeria; and the loss of that affection Montauban had formerly professed for her, which, to her fond imagination, comprised almost every earthly blessing — these all crowded in her mind, so that life seemed now to be of such a heavy weight of misery, she prayed to be released from so frail a tenement, and to seek with ardour her native skies.

In this strain of melancholy ideas, whilst pacing with hurried and unequal steps these gothic chambers, apparently allotted for her convenience, several hours passed, and with them a termination of her solitude. A female attendant of madame Rodolphus now entered the outer room, and not observing her fair charge, exclaimed—"Holy Virgin! what is become of our lady?"—"Here," answered Eleanor, as she hastened towards her, pleased with the idea of meeting a human creature, from whom she could obtain some information of the place in which she was immured; and continued

—"Finding myself better, I have been walking through these splendid rooms for some hours; will you be so obliging as to inform me under whose roof I have the honour of being an inmate?"—"Dear, dear," replied the servant, "do you not know, my lady? Why this is the castle Oldenzo, belonging to signior Rodolphus; and I was now come to see if you was well enough to descend to the saloon, where my mistress is waiting to receive you."

Eleanor then inquired by whom she had been brought there? and the answer she obtained was, in a carriage, on the preceding evening, with the countess's attendant, Lauretta, who had, however, immediately returned to Valleroy, which, she said, was a scene of the most unexampled confusion and misery.

"Ah me!" replied Eleanor, "I now well recollect each circumstance, and dread to be apprized of what my heart fearfully tells me is true—that I have no longer

longer a friend on earth!"—"I am sure, my lady, if what I hear is fact," ejaculated the woman, "such friends as the count and countess Anselmo are no great loss to you. It's a pity, however, she had not confessed her crime, and received absolution, before the vengeance of justice overtook her iniquities!"

"What do you mean by these allusions?" exclaimed Eleanor; "speak intelligibly, that I may comprehend you." The commanding manner in which this was uttered somewhat intimidated its auditor, who therefore declined any further conference, by saying that her mistress would be displeased if she staid any longer. She then made a low curtsey to the astonished and almost heart-broken Eleanor, and departed.

CHAP. IX.

What equal torment to the griefe of mind,
And pining anguish hid in gentle heart,
That inly feeds itself with thoughts unkinde,
And nourisheth her own consuming smart?
What medicine can any leache's art
Yield such a sore, that doth her grievance hide,
And will to none her maladie impart? SPENCER.

IMAGINATION, cruel harbinger of grief, that conjures up to the mind the most frightful images of horror, to counterbalance the momentary effusion of joy, in the breasts it unhappily deigns to reside in, now acted with its malign influence on the too-keen sensibility of the amiable Eleanor. Rumours of an unpleasant nature, respecting the mysterious death

death of the late general de Montauban, in which, but too true, the names of the count and countess Anselmo were implicated, had often attracted her attention. Confident as she was of their innocence, and that this injurious report proceeded from some dire foe, who was jealous of their felicity, it had, however, always met with the contempt it merited; yet now, under the present circumstances, the terrific appearance of those men she had seen at Valleroy, the distress pictured on the countenances of the young Rodolphus, of Lauretta, and the concealed grief of the confessor Lodovico, spoke forcibly the truth that the strangers were ministers of justice; and therefore the idea rushed instantly to her mind, that the fatal blow had been struck, the axe of the executioner already levelled at the defenceless head of her benefactor, count Anselmo. No ray of hope illuminated the course of these terrific visions, which alternately succeeded each other in her bewildered

brain. She deeply mourned the loss of the amiable mother of Montauban, yet was it combined with an expression of envy. "Momentary," sighed Eleanor, "was her pains, to gain those blessed mansions of the just—eternal will be her felicity. Soul up-lifting thought!" she continued, "which can alone support the human frame to endure with resignation the various and lamentable miseries of this sublunary state."

A mind so tempered with religion's fervent spark of ethereal essence, cannot, however, be long under the dominion of any earthly passion. Eleanor's education, from her earliest remembrance, had been imbibed in the confines of a monastery —that of Santa Maria was considered the most strict in discipline of all religious orders established in Italy, since the appointment of the confessor Lodovico, who was a man possessed of great learning, applying it always to the most beneficial purposes, for the welfare of those

those under his jurisdiction: in possession of immense wealth, his charitable donations were numberless; and it may be truly said of him, in the divine language of Scripture, "He caused the widow and the orphan's heart to sing with joy." To this saint-like man, therefore, did Eleanor determine to have recourse. She had felt respect and duty for count Anselmo, but the confessor Lodovico she had ever truly loved and venerated as a parent.

Several days now elapsed, and no second invitation from madame Rodolphus arriving, it occasioned some surprise, and likewise disappointment to Eleanor; yet in her present state of mind, it was certainly of benefit, as it allowed her to indulge the first emotions of her grief, and by that means restore her mind to some degree of tranquillity. She then began to reflect on the most efficient method of addressing Lodovico, to request her return to the convent of Santa Maria,

where now, bereft as she was of every worldly friend, all her wishes centered. Perhaps, too, there might arise in her breast a latent hope that such a proceeding would cause some satisfaction to Montauban, and quiet his suspicions respecting Ernestine Rodolphus. From the maternal loss she supposed the former to have sustained, it was much her wish to have written to Albert, to condole with him on the melancholy event; but she knew not where to direct her letter; therefore that idea was instantly abandoned; and in her more collected and serious moments, applauded herself that she did not endeavour to acquire the information of his residence; for what might have been considered as deference and attention, in the exalted sphere she had hitherto moved in, as the acknowledged ward of count Anselmo, might now, she reflected, in adversity, be deemed an insult.

On the fourth day of her residence at Oldenzo,

Oldenzo, no longer being able to plead illness as a reason for her confinement, and supposing the signora would be highly displeased, Eleanor, with trembling steps, left her apartment, and directed her course to the lower part of the castle, to obtain an interview with its hostess, and to make an apology for not attending her commands on a previous invitation. The long-winding galleries through which she passed were magnificently adorned with paintings of battle-pieces, and the portraits of the ancestors of Rodolphus, in splendid gold frames of the most curious workmanship. Candelabras, filled with burning incense, were arranged in various parts to emit fragrance, and to throw an additional light on those beautiful relics of antiquity.

To the left of the lower gallery was an extensive library, and as the door of it was open, curiosity induced her to enter. At the further end of the apartment, she

observed a lady, very elegantly attired, seated at a table, perusing some papers, and with so much attention, that the appearance of Eleanor did not disturb her employment. Politeness, however, she thought, required of her to make an apology to the stranger for the intrusion; and in the act of doing so, Eleanor discovered she was addressing madame Rodolphus, who instantly arose from her seat, and with much condescension welcomed her unexpected visitant. The apprehensions of this interview, so much dreaded by Eleanor, having subsided, and in so favourable a manner, her spirits became calmer, and with tolerable steadiness she answered to her various inquiries respecting the sisterhood of Santa Maria, many of whom she was personally acquainted with; but the one madame Rodolphus more particularly alluded to, and of whom she wished for information, was Cecilia, who, from her great proficiency in music, which she had acquired

at

at the convent, had obtained for her, amongst her intimates, the name of St. Cecilia, the lady to whom Eleanor was so extremely partial, that she had ever assigned to her the tender appellation of sister; and notwithstanding she was many years the senior of Eleanor, there reigned such congeniality of sentiment between them, such similarity of disposition in their pursuits, that seldom were they asunder. At a very early period of her age, ere seventeen summers had rolled their course, Cecilia had been compelled to take the veil, from the express command of her parents, whose names and condition in life had ever been kept a secret from all the sisterhood, excepting the lady abbess and the monk Lodovico, to whom she had oft, with tearful eyes, acquainted Eleanor her history was but too well known, and by them much lamented. The deep melancholy with which this unfortunate nun was oppressed was such, that at times fears were excited

cited lest it might lead at last to mental derangement. At those periods, none had the power of soothing or allaying her grief but Eleanor, who, from possessing likewise great taste in singing, and power of execution, as well as great knowledge in instrumental music, whilst leaning on the bosom of her young friend, shed tears of joy at the performance; and by degrees, so far lost the remembrance of her own sorrows, as to join in the noble anthems so expressively delivered by the pious Eleanor. These harmonic strains, being always a signal of the nun's returning composure of mind, and as they were generally performed after evening vespers, the confessor Lodovico was often a delighted auditor. Repeatedly had he expressed to Eleanor his opinion of Cecilia's conduct, which, he said, was truly praiseworthy, combining in it every Christian virtue, and a perfect model for the female sex. So great, indeed, was the monk's veneration

for

for this hapless nun, that Eleanor had often observed him to turn pale at the very sight of her, and his whole frame become so agitated, as totally to be unable to continue his devotional duty. Not so felt Cecilia; a pale serenity, accompanied with profound respect, alone marked her behaviour towards this holy man. She seldom conversed with any one, Eleanor excepted, without whose society, she would frequently exclaim, the life of her soul was annihilated. For this reason it was that madame Rodolphus so particularly now inquired respecting the health of Cecilia. She however could relate no satisfactory intelligence of her friend, not having been permitted to visit the monastery since her late residence at Valleroy.

On observing, therefore, that the very name of Cecilia had grieved her young guest, she desisted from further inquiry, and likewise preserved the same silence in regard to the unfortunate count and

countess

countess Anselmo, only observing, that she expected Ernestine from Valleroy the succeeding morning.

The table was now spread with every delicacy the season could afford, by order of madame Rodolphus; and to enjoy exclusively the company and conversation of her guest, the servants were dismissed during the repast. Amongst the various topics introduced by the polite hostess, Eleanor learnt with surprise, that it was her intention to set off, in a few days, for Arezzo, for the purpose of conducting her daughter on her return to Oldenzo, and that she expected the pleasure of being accompanied by our heroine. This was an honour by no means acceptable to the lovely girl, who had hoped, by that time, to have been again enshrined in the sanctuary of Santa Maria; she however acquiesced with the proposal, determining patiently to endure the evil she could not, with propriety, avoid.

On account of Eleanor's ill state of health,

health, madame Rodolphus permitted her to withdraw to her chamber at an early hour of the evening; and to prevent troubling the domestics, who all appeared to her insolent and assuming, she would not accept their attendance. Eleanor respectfully took leave of madame Rodolphus, who, as she was retiring, intimated to her melancholy guest, that she would be under no necessity of confining herself during her stay at Oldenzo, but requested she would pass the mornings in walking, riding, or any other pursuits most congenial to her taste and inclination; then wishing her good-night, madame Rodolphus again commenced the employment she was before engaged in, of perusing the manuscript papers, apparently with the deepest attention.

The night was extremely boisterous, and the wind whistled with dismal moan, as Eleanor, with her taper, ascended with timid footsteps the winding staircases, and glided along the spacious galleries,

to

to reach her destination. An indescribable emotion of sudden fear overwhelmed her as she paused to listen to the inclemency of the storm, which was more violent, and acted with greater fury, than any she had ever remembered. The heavy peals of thunder, which apparently rolled over the edifice, seemed to threaten every instant its dissolution into a mass of ruins. Eleanor now regretted that she had not accepted of the attendance of a servant. Being completely overcome with terror, she resolved to return again to the library, until the storm was somewhat abated; when proceeding for that purpose, to her great surprise, she found she had taken a wrong direction; and in endeavouring to extricate herself from this new difficulty, her terrors became so alarming, as totally to forbid her proceeding; she therefore sat down on one of the steps to recover her fright, and observed, opposite her resting-place, an apartment, which, from its appearance, seemed

seemed to have been appropriated for a prison. The door of it was of massy iron, and as it was open, she could discern, from a waning moon, which the clouds made appear at intervals, that the windows, which were doubly grated, were so high as utterly to exclude the sight from any person within. A few oaken chairs, and a table of the same materials, were all the furniture the room appeared to contain.

In every gust of the wind, Eleanor fancied she heard the sound of human misery appealing to the unmerciful elements for relief. With breathless agony she now rose from her seat, and endeavoured to descend the staircase; her limbs, however, refused their office, and totally deprived her of the power of escaping from this desolate situation. The delusion of her senses became so great, that she supposed not only the sounds of a human voice were heard, but that she could distinguish the footsteps of a per-

son walking in the opposite apartment. A sudden emotion of courageous resolution impelled her for the second time to rise, that she might be convinced of its reality, as from the innocency of her life, she judged that no being of supernatural or human form would attempt to injure her. Under this impression of mind, of which, however, a nearer acquaintance with the world has but too often proved the fallacy, Eleanor arose, and taking the taper, advanced to the door of this dreary apartment. Some deliberation was again required before she could attempt to enter. A profound silence reigned around; the wind had almost died away, as if worn out with previous exertion, and had now sought repose, to calm and allay the sad effects of its fury. Ashamed, however, of this indecision and weakness, Eleanor proceeded into the interior.

She saw no one. The room was of an oblique direction, and of extensive length:

gth: as she continued her course, her
t got entangled in some chains which
on the floor, and it was with difficulty
could keep herself from falling;
circumstance corroborated the idea
ere entertained, of its having been a
ce of confinement. In extricating
self from them, she perceived an iron
g, which, from its appearance, seemed
be the fastening of a secret door in
flooring, and by which, she imagined,
person she had seen descended. "Ah
!" sighed Eleanor, as she bent her
s on these dreadful shackles of slavery,
some poor wretch, perhaps, is here
aning under the tyranny of Italian
s, untimely cut off from the blessings
society—the rewards of fame—or the
re alluring and peaceful palm of ho-
t industry. Dark era of despotism!"
exclaimed—"lamentable age! when
vord—a look, supposed derogatory to
annic power, is deemed sufficient to

plunge

plunge its devoted victim in a living tomb!"

These reflections brought a greater degree of courage to the trembling heart of Eleanor, and strength of mind sufficient to put into execution what these thoughts suggested. "Perhaps," she continued, "to me is given the power of unveiling the specious garb of hypocrisy—" The name of Rodolphus once escaped her lips, but was as suddenly discarded, as an idea wrong, and even unpardonable to indulge. The present period of the life of Eleanor was, however, teeming with events most distressful to her repose. Count Anselmo, her revered benefactor, whose life, if yet spared from the hands of the executioner, was still immured in a dungeon, she reflected, such as this was, loaded with ignominy, and the revilings of popular vengeance; by whose fiat, not only an individual, but thousands, are often immolated,

molated, to appease their ungovernable fury.

As Eleanor now withdrew from the spot which had arrested attention, and commanded her commiseration, an emotion of shuddering horror pervaded her, from again fancying that she heard a stifled sound of human distress issuing from the place beneath. On turning to listen if it was repeated, and in looking to the further end of this dread abode, she observed the pale glimmering of a lamp, and from its light discovered that it was placed on a kind of pedestal; that this part of the room was partitioned from the remainder by long iron bars, apparently fixed in the vaulted roof. Eleanor now exclaimed—"It is no longer a delusion—it is real woe that appals my listening ear; why, therefore, should I be afraid?" and again, as reproaching herself for her timidity, she continued—"For shame, Eleanor! to deny your aid to a fellow-creature in distress, when

when a time may come that you will stand in need of it yourself." With this reflection, ever so deeply engraven in her breast by her preceptors, and so necessary to be inculcated in the minds of youth, our heroine, therefore, now acted up to its dictates. She approached the grating, supposing it might lead, by an easier way, to the room beneath, from which the voice proceeded. Her progress was however arrested, by discovering, on the inside of these massy bars, a deplorable object, apparently a man, although the sex was scarcely discernible, from the dimness of the light, and the figure being enveloped in a long wrapper. On a pallet covered with straw lay this mass of wretchedness, and, to appearance, asleep, except when the chains with which he was manacled, part of which lay hanging on the ground, and at the least movement, rattled, which appeared to make his repose disturbed and uneasy. This was a piteous sight to the already

already terrified Eleanor, the more so from her being convinced that the expressions of distress she had heard did not proceed from this unhappy prisoner, but must have arisen from some other in the room beneath. "Oh Heavens!" she now exclaimed aloud, "into what an abode am I secluded—a common receptacle, perhaps, for culprits and outlaws! They have deceived me—it cannot be the castle of Rodolphus in which I am an inmate!"

This was a moment of trial. Doubt, terror, and pity, by turns succeeded to harrass and distract her bewildered imagination. The first, and most commendable, was, that if she attempted to awake the prisoner, and listen to the story of his woes, there might be a vigilant guard so concealed as to overhear their conversation, and to prevent publicity of this circumstance, be the destruction of them both. The second, the consequent terror she felt at addressing a stranger, who

might be of bad character, and deserving of his present fate: "Perhaps," thought Eleanor, "a murderer!" yet to retire from the scene of misery, like too many sensitive beings, who have an abhorrence to contemplate or relieve wretchedness, where it is repugnant to their fine feelings, was a species of cruelty, however, of which her amiable disposition was incapable.

It was impossible for Eleanor to continue much longer in her present situation; the icy chillness of the dungeon, (for so it might well be called,) and the agitation of her mind, affected her almost to fainting; in a low tone of voice, therefore, she said, "For pity's sake, my friend, inform me how to return to the lower apartments of the castle, for in the intricacies of the passages of this extensive building, I have lost my way." She paused; the man still slept. In a louder tone, Eleanor repeated her question. He started up from his bed in horror, and

flew

flew towards her; she fell senseless on the ground.

The rattling of the chains—the death-like countenance and ghastly figure of the man, as, savage-like, he appeared to dart upon his prey, produced that instantaneous suspension of every faculty. No relief could be afforded to the sufferer; the wretched cause of this misfortune could not move beyond the length of his chain; nor, if he had, is it likely the poor object would have tendered his services. From the ignorant superstition of the age, he believed her to be a supernatural being, and the fright occasioned in him, by such an appearance, caused a momentary delirium. With hands clenched, and eyes raised up to heaven, for some time he continued in mental prayer.

All-powerful nature at length restored Eleanor to animation. It was, however, with extreme difficulty that she could support her trembling frame from re-

lapsing into her former state; half rising, she supported her fragile form by clinging to the bars of the prison. "Angel of Heaven!" exclaimed the man, as he endeavoured, in a kneeling attitude, to draw nearer the supposed vision, "pity, oh! pity the sorrows of a miserable outcast, who, for years, has suffered captivity within these dreary walls, whose every cry is but the sound of lasting misery!" As these expressions excited less of terror in Eleanor than the singular wretchedness of the man's appearance, she faintly said, with eyes bent to the ground, fearful of again encountering the frantic looks of the prisoner—"Alas! what can I do to assuage your sorrows, for my situation here is scarcely less afflicting? Indeed, good man," she continued, sighing, "I have no power to help you." Eleanor paused, reflecting on the danger that might occur from thus openly expressing her sentiments to a stranger. The captive now started from his humble posture,

posture, and exclaimed, with maddened voice—"There is no hope for me!—Why do I shrink at ridding myself of this mortal load—this cumbrous weight of clay?" He then dashed the massy chains against his head, exclaiming—"Now to contend with the damning spirits of darkness and despair!" From the stunning blows, he fell prostrate on the ground, which was in an instant covered with blood. Eleanor, supposing that the unfortunate maniac was deprived of life, gave a terrific scream, and loudly called for assistance. She soon heard the bolts of the secret door undrawing, and in another moment it was opened, and a dark lanthorn was placed near it. With indescribable emotion, Eleanor now saw a person ascend from the trap-door, and carefully closing it after him, begin to direct his course towards the prisoner. For self-preservation, being certain, if found in these mysterious apartments, she should fall a

sacrifice to her temerity, Eleanor now glided to a distant part of the chamber; and as the figure continued to approach, with great presence of mind she retreated away from the direction of the light, and concealed herself behind the part of a projecting wall at the extremity of the room. The agony of her feelings at such a dreadful scene is past description; she observed this man take from his pocket a key, with which he unlocked another door near the grating, and almost directly after saw him enter the prison, and in sullen silence, with the utmost apparent composure, take off the chains of the dying captive.

This was a favourable moment for escaping these midnight horrors, the castle bell having just tolled the hour of twelve; and however desirous Eleanor might be to witness the termination of this mysterious proceeding, and to know whether there was any chance of the prisoner's recovery, yet she wisely thought

of

of the perils that would inevitably attend such a curiosity. It however required great resolution to attempt even escaping at this juncture. Her light was extinguished, and the part of the room in which she was concealed so narrow, that she must pass the grating close to where the man was unchaining the unhappy object, who, by his delirium, had been the cause of so much just-felt terror on the part of Eleanor, and deprived her of hearing a relation of his sufferings, and, in the end, perhaps of assuaging them. There was no time to be lost, however; indecision of mind sometimes produces the most lamentable effects; she therefore with cautious footsteps left her concealment; the man, whom she now supposed was a guard, being employed in clearing away the blood which had congealed on the disfigured countenance of the poor captive, Eleanor moved onwards without interruption. A sudden impulse for a moment arrested her pro-

gress as she drew near the small iron door that had admitted him into the prison; the key of it still remained in the lock, and the dark lanthorn was placed close to the door. Eleanor took up the light, and although every limb shook with apprehensions of being discovered in the theft by the ferocious guard, who was, however, still intent upon his employment, she instantly turned the spring of the lanthorn, and taking it with her, escaped out of this dreadful apartment, and with as much haste as her faltering frame would admit of, again descended the staircase leading to the winding gallery, in the intricacies of which Eleanor had before missed the direction to her chamber. Now, however, she more minutely inspected it, and soon discovered her error. To the left of the gallery was a small door, and on opening it, she found, to her satisfaction, that she had arrived at the top of the grand marble staircase, which had attracted her attention

tion in the morning, and at the bottom of which was the suit of apartments allotted for her use. With a light footstep, therefore, and a beating heart, Eleanor regained her chamber, and having carefully fastened the door, to prevent pursuit from the supposed jailor of the prison, she knelt and returned thanks to Providence for having delivered her from the impending danger in the mysterious abode of the unfortunate captive. Many were the reflections that crowded on her mind respecting this singular adventure; it greatly augmented her fears, and now created an abhorrence to continue an inmate in a place where a fellow-creature (if he still survived) would be suffering the extreme of human misery. Yet did the tender feelings of her disposition revolt at flying from distress, when there might be a probability of alleviating it. Almost exhausted from the agitation of her spirits, she now threw herself upon her couch, and wept bitterly for some

hours; to sleep, however, was impossible, in the present distracted state of her mind.

The morning dawned; the sun arose, and darted his blessed rays into the chamber of Eleanor, yet could not its warmth cheer for one moment the drooping soul of the amiable girl. An icy chillness pervaded every faculty, as the horrors of the preceding night came, with redoubled force, to her recollection. For a time it absorbed every idea, and obliterated the remembrance of her own unhappiness. The native benevolence of her disposition, to procure the comforts of others, was strongly demonstrated in her present intention, that she would, if possible, learn the history of the poor captive, and, if innocent, effect his release, should Heaven in pity have spared him to repent the crime of self-destruction, even if her own life fell a sacrifice to her humanity—"Such an act," she proudly exclaimed, "may prove the

means

means of tearing off the mask of villainy, and make the oppressor tremble."

Inspired by the thought, and with resolution far beyond what a female is generally endowed with, Eleanor now revolved in her mind the most efficient method to carry this her hazardous plan into execution. On mature reflection, she determined that some days should intervene before she would again attempt to revisit the prisoner, as it was extremely probable he would for some time be strictly guarded; and feeling a repugnance to go unattended, Eleanor proposed to question an old man, who, on the preceding evening, had come to madame Rodolphus for orders, as, from his superior manner and appearance to the rest of the domestics, she judged him to be a steward in the family; there seemed, in her opinion, to be an honest bluntness in the man, which augured a humane heart. To this person, therefore, she determined to reveal her mysterious adventure, and by

every persuasion in her power, if the object of commiseration should be deserving of interference in his behalf, induce this old man to second her intention of endeavouring to release him from his captivity.

A servant now entered the apartment, to announce that breakfast was ready in the saloon; Eleanor, therefore, although extremely indisposed, instantly attended the summons, from a faint hope that Ernestine might be arrived at the castle, and that she should acquire some intelligence of the unfortunate count Anselmo, and a more satisfactory account than what she had heard so maliciously related by the servant, of the recent events which had taken place at Valleroy.

CHAP. X.

Be these sad sighs confirmers of thy words?
Then speak again, not all thy former tale,
But this one, whether thy tale be true.

SHAKESPEARE.

THE second interview between madame Rodolphus and Eleanor was very different from the preceding one; there appeared in the former a peculiarly affected and overacted civility towards her young guest, which at times changed, however, to a contemptuous irony—"You do not look refreshed by your repose; I hope no evil genii disturbed you last night?" inquired madame, fixing her eyes steadfastly on those of Eleanor: to which she replied mournfully, "I am never under the

the influence of such fears as those—it is only real misery that can have that effect:" and continued, "I grieve for the misfortunes of my friends, the noble count and countess Anselmo, whose lives, if yet spared from the machinations of their accusers, are, I am afraid, doomed to suffer every indignity."—"My acquaintance with the Anselmos is very slight," she superciliously answered; and continued—"The noble lord, my husband, has, I believe, professed some degree of friendship for those people; I have therefore no doubt but that he has endeavoured to mitigate their mutual crime, and from his great and deserved authority in the senate, will most likely soften the decree of death into lasting imprisonment." This ungracious speech finished, a congratulatory one followed, at the protection afforded Eleanor, at this juncture, in the castle of Oldenzo.

"My grateful thanks are certainly due for such kindness," she replied; and with

with much humility continued—"Yet, my honoured lady, with your permission, as I think solitude more desirable for me at this unhappy period, I should prefer seeking an asylum in the convent of Santa Maria, and there to remain until my spirits in some degree recover the dreadful shock they have sustained." The wife of Rodolphus evinced no surprise at this intelligence, politely expressing it was her wish that Eleanor should not be influenced, by any sense of obligation, to induce the acting contrary to what she thought most conducible to her welfare; at the same time she continued—"I hope you will favour me with your company at Arezzo, as I shall commence my journey in a few hours, having already given the necessary directions for that purpose." This sudden proposition of leaving the castle was as unpleasant as it had been unlooked for by Eleanor, who had hoped, before that event took place, to have endeavoured to effect the rescue of the

the poor captive, for whom she felt so great an interest, that next to that of her friends at Valleroy, upon whose fate she knew depended that of her own happiness or misfortune through life, no circumstance had ever created so much her commiseration, and so great a desire to alleviate it.

Various were the excuses she feigned, in hopes of being left at Oldenzo in the absence of its possessor; but all was unavailing; the resolution of the proud hostess of the castle was not to be changed. Eleanor was apprized that she must instantly prepare for her departure; and to expedite it, rang the bell, and gave orders for her woman to attend on Eleanor to her chamber, and with the greatest speed to arrange the necessary apparel for her journey, and to pack it up in one of her own travelling trunks; thus making sure of the company of her melancholy guest to Arezzo.

With more reluctance than she had ever

ever remembered to have felt, Eleanor now retired with the servant to perform the commands of madame Rodolphus. She seated herself near the window of her apartment, and having pointed out to the domestic where the clothes lay, Eleanor began with a pencil to record on her tablets the principal tenor of the communication to be sent to the confessor of Santa Maria, in which she entreated to be again admitted into that monastery on her return from Arezzo. The servant having now commenced her occupation, began to inquire of Eleanor what apparel she should select for her use? "Any that you please, for I am quite indifferent as to my appearance there, I assure you," answered Eleanor, somewhat disconcerted at the interruption.—"Indifferent!" retorted the loquacious waiting-woman, "when there will be such grand doings on my lady's arrival at Arezzo; for do you not know, signora," she continued, "that it is the wedding of her daughter with

count

count Martini, a Genoese nobleman, and that there are to be grand fêtes given to commemorate the happy occasion?"

"Is the attachment mutual?" inquired Eleanor: to which her informant replied —"Yes, I believe so; as much as can be expected between these great people, where equality of birth and worldly grandeur are all that is coveted by our nobility—Talking of that," said the woman, "your situation, signora, must be very uncomfortable, so nearly allied as you are to this family."—"I allied to them?" inquired the astonished Eleanor, to whom this intelligence had almost acted as a sentence of annihilation.—"Yes, in truth, signora," repeated Aldrude; "and if you'll faithfully promise not to utter a syllable that I have told of it, I'll tell you all my mistress said about your history before you came to the castle." Eleanor then assured the woman she never would divulge from whence she obtained the information. With this

Aldrude

Aldrude commenced the following account of the lovely girl's supposed birth, and relationship to the family of Rodolphus, first premising, however, in the usual style of tale-bearers, that she should by no means have revealed the secrets of her mistress, if she had continued to confide in her; but as of late she had been extremely reserved, and treated her with indifference, and even harshness, Aldrude thought she was fully authorized, therefore, to revenge this change of treatment from the proud, and we may add, from having cherished, as a confidant, a menial servant, weak and contemptible madame Rodolphus.

The story of Aldrude being prolix, and mingled with a variety of uninteresting matter, quite foreign to the subject of discourse, we shall, therefore, only point out the following, as particularly relating to the supposed birth of the orphan, and which appeared to the afflicted

Eleanor

Eleanor deserving of some degree of credit:—

The father of the present signior Rodolphus, Aldrude informed her, was reputed to have been a man of austere temper, and extremely vicious in his principles. He married early in life the only daughter of a Roman of high distinction, named Claudius, who, on his death-bed, bequeathed to signior Rodolphus the guardianship of his nephew, a youth about seventeen years of age, the only son of a beloved sister, who, with her husband, signior Oldenzo, whilst on their voyage to Messina, were unfortunately shipwrecked on the coast of Sicily, to the inexpressible grief of their relations, all having mourned their loss with the liveliest sorrow. "It is said," continued Aldrude, "that as soon as this wicked old man was in possession of the papers and documents left to him in care by his wife's father, and which, at the expiration

piration of a few years, would have given to the young Oldenzo the inheritance of this castle, and the immense estate contiguous, he contrived to have him assassinated; whilst other reports are, that he escaped the persecution of signior Rodolphus, and fled to Sicily—that he employed various means to recover the fortune left him by his uncle, but without effect, his unjust guardian having destroyed the will, and every thing relative to the proving of it; the poor young man, therefore, they say, soon after died, in a mendicant state, in a hovel on the sea-coast, near the spot where the bodies of his parents were washed on shore from the wreck; and in which place there is even now to be seen a beacon, erected by him, to guard mariners from the fatal rocks on which their ship was lost.

"Whatever was his destiny, this far is certain," said Aldrude, "that the poor orphan,

orphan, and rightful heir to this castle, it having belonged to his father's ancestors for these several hundred years, never obtained even a moidore from his wicked guardian, by whose family this immense place is therefore now in quiet possession." She then proceeded to inform Eleanor of what most concerned her; that the old man, besides his son, the present signior Rodolphus, had a daughter named *Eleonora*."

Having laid a particular stress on that word, the trembling girl, anxious to discover some flaw in the narrative by which she could persuade the woman of the injustice of the supposition respecting her being allied to the family, said hastily—"That's not my name."—"Something like it, signora," she replied with a significant smile; and continued—"but be patient, lady, and I'll convince you more about it. Well, I believe I left off where I was going to acquaint

acquaint you of the history of the old man's daughter. Ah, they say she was a very amiable lady, and that she was betrothed to a very fine gentleman in a distant country." Aldrude then began a long account of the charitable virtues of Eleonora, that she was the idol of every person who knew her, and beautiful as an angel. She then proceeded to relate, that from the intimacy which subsisted between the possessors of the castles of Valleroy and Oldenzo, they were accustomed to pass with each other several months in every year; that Eleonora, on her attaining the age of fifteen, and being just emancipated from a school-room, and the trammels of a severe governess and duenna, was invited, with the rest of the family of Rodolphus, to pass her birth-day at Valleroy.

The library bell now rung twice, which was a summons for Aldrude to attend on her mistress; she promised, however, to return as soon as possible, to finish the story,

atory, for the completion of which Eleanor now began to feel the most painful curiosity.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

The course of true love never did run smooth;
But either it was different in blood,
Or else misgrafted in respect of years;
Or else it stood upon the choice of friends;
Or if there were a sympathy in choice,
War, death, or sickness, did lay siege to it,
Making it momentary, as a sound,
Swift as a shadow, short as any dream;
Brief as the lightning in the collied night,
That, in a spleen, unfolds both heaven and earth:
And ere a man hath power to say—Behold!
The jaws of darkness do devour it up:
So quick bright things come to confusion.

SHAKESPEARE.

What kind of sullen suspense which pervades the breast of a youthful warrior

on the eve of combat, wherein he supposes rests all his future hopes of glory and renown, and with that fatal despair which follows such aspiring thoughts, almost to madness if unsuccessful, did Eleanor ruminate on the train of evils which would surround her, if the account given by Aldrude should prove authentic. From what had been already related, she easily anticipated the sequel. In a state of mind the most deplorable at these suggestions of her fancy, did Eleanor pace the chamber, and listen to every footstep that sounded along the hall, in hopes that it might be Aldrude, for whose promised return she now watched with the utmost impatience, as being the fiat of her future destiny.

The disposition of Eleanor was naturally inclined to reflection and the love of solitude. A conventual life, therefore, had been her first wish—the summit of her happiness. She had repeatedly applied to count Anselmo for permission

mission to take the veil, as most suited, she said, to her inclination, and proper in her orphan state. The count, however, had been ever averse to such a solemn proceeding, until some time after his marriage with the widow of general de Montauban, when, from some peculiar hidden cause, he became the strenuous advocate of that which before he had so strongly deprecated.

"Strange perversity of human nature!" he exclaimed, during a conversation which he had with Eleanor on the subject, when, to his great amazement, he found she hesitated, and requested more time to be allowed her for consideration on this most important point. The solution of this enigma, and supposed fickleness of character, had the count been then apprized of one occurrence, would have been extremely easy, and no longer to be wondered at. The pious, tender, susceptible Eleanor, had not, at the period of her application to

her benefactor for embracing the veil, seen an Albert de Montauban. No sooner did that event occur, that a total revolution was instantaneously effected, both in the mind and sentiments of Eleanor. The unerring shaft pierced deep, nor is it easy to say of these young people who most it wounded, Albert or Eleanor. Her heart then acknowledged thew orld had charms, in which she could be happy. Albert was her world, and in him she comprised every earthly blessing. Every thought not bent on Albert she considered as a crime to love's fidelity; even in her prayers he was remembered; and each sigh, each tear, was consecrated to him whilst reflecting on his virtues, (and in true lowliness of mind,) her own insufficiency. Passion, the most refined, pure, uncontaminated as the spark of ethereal essence, revelled in the breast of Eleanor. Ah! lovely, unsuspecting fair-one, little did you then imagine that the sublime friendship, which you were.

were cherishing with so much ardour, would occasion you the sufferings of years—perhaps during the remainder of your future life!

On the evening Eleanor met her lover so unexpectedly at the temple, incensed at his ungracious, harsh treatment, she vowed, in the warmth of her displeasure, to withdraw herself from his sight for ever, by becoming (what she had with so much ardour solicited) one of the sisterhood of Santa Maria. Her anger, however, soon subsided; she yet lingered in the centre of attraction, and the vow, too hastily uttered, repented of, and soon forgotten. Now, however, Eleanor supposed imperious duty would command the sacrifice, and should her afflicting suggestions prove true, a most willing votary, as without the object for whom she had alone desisted from it, the world would be a desert.

She again seated herself, and continued

the important letter to the confessor Lodovico, and was again interrupted. Aldrude re-entered the chamber, to inform her that madame Rodolphus had altered her intention, and did not leave the castle until the succeeding morning. This intelligence was so far agreeable to Eleanor, as it would allow more time for communicating her thoughts to her revered preceptor, and likewise a probability that she might be enabled to gain some information of the unfortunate prisoner.

"My lady likewise says," continued the woman, "that as she shall be much engaged this evening, she will not require your attendance."—"Attendance!" exclaimed Eleanor, with marked emphasis and displeasure at so degrading an epithet; yet on reflecting a moment afterwards, that in her present forlorn situation, she must endeavour to humble the inborn pride with which she was possessed, which had, however, often

silenced

silenced the meditated attacks of presumptuous wealth, awed the fool, and commanded respect from her inferiors.

Poverty is alone the school for pride, and a state of dependence its punishment: Eleanor felt it so. Instantly stifling, therefore, the sentiments of disgust she was inclined to feel towards the possessors of Oldenzo, and anxious to hear the remaining account of their history, she replied—"Very well," and closing her unfinished letter to the confessor, requested Aldrude to recommence her narrative.

"Oh yes, signora," she said with eagerness, "I have returned expressly for that purpose; but I must first fasten the chamber-door, for fear of interruption; yet before I do that," she continued in a whisper, "I think I had best look about the apartments, for fear some person should be concealed in them to overhear our conversation; for I do assure you, signora, we have many spies

lurking about this horrible castle, who are employed by Rodolphus to give him information of every thing that passes here in his absence." This was a favourable opportunity for Eleanor to question her respecting the mysterious stranger; and as she judged the woman to be sincere in her professions of regard for her, and of entertaining a rooted enmity towards her employers, as soon as Aldrude had been satisfied that there were no intruders near, and secured the outer door of the apartments, she related her singular adventure on the preceding evening, which was only now and then interrupted by the following ejaculations her auditor made of—"How surprising! —Oh, what a wicked master to suffer a human creature to be starved to death! —and how wonderful, I that am continually prying about other people's affairs, should not have heard of it!" With a sudden burst of feeling, however, and passion, on hearing Eleanor's description

of

of this person, and wretched appearance of the prisoner, she now cried out—"I'll lay my life on it 'tis my poor dear Trapano that he's got caged up there!"—"And who is Trapano?" inquired Eleanor.—"Trapano!" she exclaimed; "why, my loving husband, to be sure, signora, and the best fisherman in all Tuscany. Little did he think, poor dear man, that he should so soon be caught in a net himself. Oh, the wicked, insensible, hollow-hearted signior!" Some explanation being required as to the meaning of these apostrophes, Aldrude smilingly replied—"I should suppose, young lady, it is needless for me to say, that my lord likes, as well as other lords do, to have a pretty girl to attend on them; therefore says he to me one day—'Aldrude, how comes it that you prefer servitude better than living at home with your husband?'—'Please you, my lord,' says I, 'because we could never agree who should be master, Trapano or I. He swore he would,

would, and I swore that he should not.' 'Then,' said he, 'the fish may all remain in the sea, for the devil fetch me if I bring up one of them to support such a headstrong, ignorant puss as you are, Aldrude.' So, my lord,' I answered, 'poverty soon overtook us, and as I found good living very essential to obtain good looks, I accepted your lordship's service, and left poor Trapano to take care of himself.' He then asked me if I would wish to obtain him a more comfortable situation; when, to make short of the story, signora, as I was much delighted at the idea, my lord got Trapano to be made a grenadier, which he accepted, and I have never heard the least account of him since. Now, signora, don't you perceive the drift of this pretended benefit?" said Aldrude; "it is to gain my affections, for my lord is desperately in love with me, and so he has shut up my good man in a prison to obtain his wife; my lord shall not, however, receive the least

least favour from me, for I detest the very sight of him," continued the self-conceited Aldrude; "and therefore I'll release the poor prisoner, you may depend on it, lady."

"But how will you effect that, as he is so strongly chained, and guarded by the man whom I have told you of? Without great care you certainly will incur personal danger," replied Eleanor.

"Very true, signora," said Aldrude, "but I have luckily hit on a project that I have no doubt will succeed; for I am certain Finito is the jailor."—"And who is Finito?" inquired Eleanor.—"A very wicked fellow, whom my lord pretends to call his land-steward: he is continually prowling about the grounds, to be sure," she continued, "but I don't find that he does any good to them. Finito sleeps at the eastern part of the castle, notwithstanding we all told him, signora, it was haunted; because, as he used to say, laughing, he feared none but living spirits,

spirits, and only wished he had nothing else to do than dead ones to encounter with, his business would then soon be dispatched. Are not those words a convincing proof, lady, that he is the man? Now then to inform you of my plot," continued Aldrude, with great eagerness, "that, as we common people say, the biter may be bit. Finito loves good liquor; and therefore, after you, signora, and my lady, are set off for Arezzo, he shall have plenty of it. The butler is very fond of me, that I know," said the conceited waiting-maid; "and so Ugo will readily enter into my scheme, I am sure. Well, then, having made this wicked Finito quite drunk, I'll get out of his pocket the keys of the prison; and if you, lady, will direct me how we are to proceed to the dungeon——" Eleanor now interrupted her by saying—"Are you not afraid (should your intention succeed) of signior Rodolphus's anger, and even revenge, on being informed

formed of the release of his prisoner?"

"No, signora," she replied; "because Finito will bear the blame. My lord has a very high opinion of my veracity, and so I shall most positively, most obstinately declare that it was not, nor could not, be any other that Finito, his own self; for that I saw him help a man that very night over the castle walls; and that he ran away as fast as his legs could carry him. My lord Rodolphus will then instantly order Finito to be hanged; and I, to clear myself of the sin committed, shall confess to the old priest of yonder monastery; and so, signora, thus will all things be put to rights, and I shall have a husband again; for I'm quite weary of being without one, that is very certain; and I dare say you are the same, lady?"

Eleanor could not supress a smile at this singular supposition of Aldrude; she however by no means approved of the duplicity intended to be carried on in effecting

effecting the release of the captive; yet as there was no other alternative more likely to procure his liberty than the plan suggested by the servant, she did not oppose it, only reprobating in the strongest terms the injustice Aldrude proposed to act towards Finito; to prevent which, Eleanor advised that she should likewise make her escape from the castle, and accompany Trapano in his flight (if it should be him), which, however, was much doubted by our heroine, who imagined the stranger to be of much more consequence than an Italian fisherman.

Aldrude readily assented to this proposition of Eleanor, who likewise promised to assist them when she returned to the convent of Santa Maria, and which so delighted her, that the real object of the visit to poor Eleanor was quite forgotten, and when reminded of it, Aldrude fancied her mistress would require her attendance; she however faithfully promised to recommence her history of the

the family of Rodolphus in the evening.

Eleanor, once again left alone, now slightly partook of the refreshments brought her by Aldrude; and soon afterwards, feeling herself peculiarly weary and indisposed, she retired to her couch, and enjoyed an uninterrupted slumber for several hours.

END OF VOL. II.

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